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Minister admits measles vaccine made 500 children ill

LIZ HUNT and
IAN ROBERTS

More than 500 children suffered serious reactions following last year's measles vaccination campaign, which some scientists believe was unnecessary. Tom Sackville, Parliamentary Secretary at the Department of Health, said last night

that one quarter of the 530 cases were of the "immediate allergic type reactions from which no serious or long-lasting effects were known to have resulted." Three-quarters suffered "late-onset" serious reactions, such as arthritis or flu-like symptoms but none suffered any long-term damage, a spokesman for the Department

said. "The Medicines Control Agency has checked them all out and found no causal link." But parents of more than 170 children who, it is claimed, developed crippling illnesses after the immunisation, last night dismissed suggestions that no child suffered long-term damage. They claim their children,

aged between five and 16, have been left with problems ranging from partial paralysis and incontinence to seizures and brain damage, and up to 100 promised they would continue with legal action for compensation. The parents say appropriate warnings about the risks were not given. Jackie Fletcher, founder of

JABS, a parents' support group said: "The ministers are out of touch with what has happened if they truly believe that no child suffered long-term damage." The campaign to vaccinate 8m school children in the UK followed public health specialists' forecasts of a measles epidemic on a scale not seen since the 1950s. Parents were told that

up to 200,000 people could be infected, and there would be up to 50 deaths among children in an outbreak. In the event, only 35 measles cases were diagnosed in the first four months of 1995, just two of them in children. The Government says this proves the success of the campaign, but critics, led by Dr

Richard Nicholson, a paediatrician and editor of the *Bulletin of Medical Ethics*, say evidence to support predictions of an epidemic has never been produced. Speaking during a Commons adjournment debate last night, Mr Sackville said that, by mid-1994, measles was occurring at a higher frequency in England

and Wales and an epidemic had already occurred in Scotland. There was a total of 2,735 reactions reported from 1,202 children - a rate of one child affected for every 6,700 reactions. Most reports were of minor damage or of harm unlikely to have been caused by the vaccine. There were no deaths.

Tory 'moral majority' MPs beat Mackay

Family violence Bill dropped

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, was last night fighting to keep his reform of divorce law afloat after bowing to Tory backbench pressure and shelving a planned Bill on domestic violence.

He made no secret of his disappointment at losing a piece of legislation which was ambushed in its closing parliamentary stages by "moral majority" Tory MPs who complained that it undermined marriage by strengthening protection against battering for unmarried women.

In a concession which his supporters now hope will ensure that his threatened divorce measure will be included in this month's Queen's Speech, Lord Mackay said he was "considering" the representations made to him but that it was "impossible to make further progress" with the Bill in the current parliamentary session.

He made it clear that he was still willing to retain the new divorce law which ends "quickie" divorces on grounds of fault - in the legislative programme, during a series of radio and television interviews in which he declared pointedly that he hoped the Bill would "come forward as soon as possible".

Labour's legal affairs spokesman, Paul Boateng, complained that the domestic violence measure had fallen victim to a "bloody family feud" within the Tory party, but there were signs that the Lord Chan-

cellor's chances of preserving his Divorce Reform Bill had improved since last weekend. It remains far from certain that the Bill will be given the green light when ministers meet on Monday to finalise the 1995-6 programme. However, optimism in the Lord Chancellor's Department was reinforced by the fact that

What the Bill would have done

The Family Homes and Domestic Violence Bill would have provided protection against actual or threatened violence, molestation or harassment in magistrates and county courts, for spouses, cohabitants, former spouses, former cohabitants, mothers under threat from violent sons and house-sharers. There would have been greater police powers to arrest perpetrators who defied court orders. Occupation orders - including orders to pay rent or mortgage - for those outside the spouse/cohabitee category would have been for six-month periods, and granted only after securing an order for occupation rights.

forced by unmistakable signs of a backbench fightback in Lord Mackay's favour.

As a group of Tory MPs, led by Peter Bottomley, went to see the Lord Chancellor to express their strong support for the measure, there was also evidence of a belated backlash against the critics who had forced him to withdraw the do-

mestic violence Bill. Teresa Gorman, the right-wing libertarian MP for Battersea, called Lord Mackay's critics "silly".

In an article in last night's *London Evening Standard*, Mrs Gorman praised the "universally respected" Lord Mackay and added: "The Bill is the first of two reforms designed to come to terms with the fact that social patterns have changed while the law still reflects the idea that marriage is the only legitimate way of living together; anything else is living in sin."

Meanwhile, speaking after his meeting with the Lord Chancellor, Mr Bottomley said of the divorce measure: "If the Mothers' Union support it - and they do - then so should we."

But Lady Olga Maitland, one of the most prominent backbench opponents of both Bills, called in the Commons yesterday for a debate on the "role of the family in British society". She added: "We have now reached a watershed as to whether the role of the family should be enhanced or whether it should be undermined as seems to me to be certainly happening in public debate."

Refuge, which provides accommodation and support for women and children escaping domestic violence, described the shelving of the "long overdue" reforms as a tragedy.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) urged the Government to re-introduce the Bill into Parliament at the "earliest possible opportunity".

News analysis, page 19
Leading article, page 20



End of the road: Anthony Verity arrives for his seven-hour meeting with the Governors of Dulwich College yesterday. Terms of his retirement were not disclosed. Photograph: PA

Dulwich head retires after sex inquiry

LOUISE JURY

The master of Dulwich College, who has been at the centre of sexual harassment allegations, dramatically resigned his post last night after a seven-hour meeting with governors.

A statement issued through solicitors said Anthony Verity, 56, was to take early retirement from the £12.7m-a-year college in south London where he had been headmaster since 1986.

Governors had earlier cleared him of sexual harassment claims made by school secretary Anne Ridley, 38, but yesterday they found that Mr Verity had permitted an inappropriate relationship to develop and this affected the performance of his duties.

Mr Verity, who will receive a financial settlement rumoured to approach £1 million, strongly disputed there was any impropriety.

But after the meeting at a private club in central London, he looked stern-faced as he left with his wife, Patricia, saying: "I'm not allowed to say anything."

Shortly afterwards, Jane Mann, solicitor for the school, released a statement outlining both parties' agreement that it was "in the best interests of the college" for the father of two to take early retirement.

She released no details of the financial package.

Sir Colin Cole, chairman of

the governors, said: "This has been a stressful and unhappy time for the college and all concerned. The governors' sole objective throughout has been to protect and sustain the fine reputation of Dulwich College."

"Mr Verity has made a very considerable contribution to the life and success of the college over the last eight years, for which the governors and parents are very grateful. We wish him well in the future."

The school was now determined to get back to normal, Sir Colin added, and would advertise for a new master next week. Ann Ridley has also left the college on mutually agreed terms.

Mr Verity was suspended in August, four months after Mrs Ridley, his secretary of four years, claimed that he sexually harassed her on a trip to Thailand last November.

Many parents were furious to be told of the claims only just before the start of this term. Mothers led by Sue Macdiarmid and Deborah Roslund launched a campaign of support for the head.

Dulwich was founded 375 years ago. Alumni include P.G. Wodehouse, Raymond Chandler and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England.

Mr Verity was awarded a first class degree at Cambridge University. At Dulwich he was in charge of 1,400 pupils.

Schools win, roads lose in spending fight

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

Gillian Shephard yesterday came out on top in a bruising spending battle with Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, over her demand for £800m extra for education, but it will lead to deep cuts in defence, roads, overseas aid, social security and housing.

The Prime Minister gave the Secretary of State for Education and Employment his backing to settle her budget demand for

next year, as the Cabinet met to agree cuts in spending to clear the way for up to £3.5bn in tax cuts. It will meet again next Monday to complete the task.

Ministers agreed the report of the Cabinet EDX spending committee, chaired by the Chancellor, setting out the strategy for reducing public expenditure by more than £3bn below the £263bn total previously set for next year.

Michael Heseltine, the deputy Prime Minister, was

said to have played a crucial role in forcing cuts in running costs, amounting to a swingeing 5 per cent across the board in Whitehall. Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, also won an increase in his budget to fulfil a commitment for a real-terms increase in the NHS each year.

It is expected that the Chancellor will announce that the public expenditure total has been cut by £2.3bn and senior Tories said he could raid £3bn from the contingency reserve for

tax cuts. Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, led calls for the money to be spent on a 1p cut in the basic 25p rate, and raising the threshold at which people begin paying the higher rate of 40p in the pound.

The victory for Mrs Shephard was close to settling cuts in his spending through a freeze on some benefits not covered by the statutory up-rating in line with inflation. Long-term savings will be achieved by abolishing lone-parent benefit for

new claimants, underlining Tory commitment to the family. John Gummer, the Secretary of State for Environment, has conceded a £400m cut in the grant for housing association, reducing it to £800m, which is likely to be criticised by the house building industry. Sir George Young, the Secretary of State for Transport, has been forced to shelve much of his road programme, although key schemes such as the Newbury by-pass may be revived.

The Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Portillo, is being forced to accept deeper cuts, causing fresh rumblings of discontent from Tory backbench MPs.

Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, is close to settling cuts in his spending through a freeze on some benefits not covered by the statutory up-rating in line with inflation. Long-term savings will be achieved by abolishing lone-parent benefit for

IN BRIEF

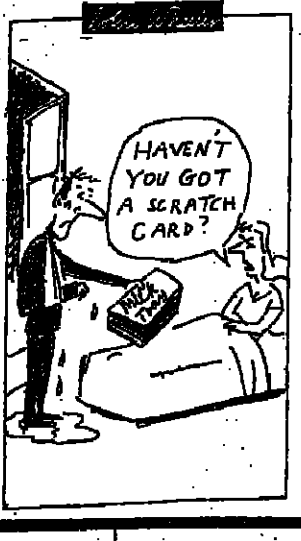
Lottery 'hitting the economy'
On the day John Major hailed the National Lottery as a great success, it emerged that the biggest loser has been the British economy - and that some children are spending more than half their pocket money on lottery tickets. Latest statistics show the lottery has taken billions of pounds out of the economy and has cut spending on other items. Page 23

MPs warned over Nolan
A failure by MPs to back disclosure of their earnings from consultancies would damage the honour and reputation of parliament in the eyes of the electorate, a member of the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life declared. Page 2

Feeding bad habits
School dinners are bad for your health, according to the National Heart Forum. Many schools provide meals that are high in fat and sugar and are putting children at risk of developing heart disease. Page 2

Bomb 'chief' held
France claimed a major breakthrough after police arrested an Algerian said to have helped to "command and co-ordinate" recent bomb attacks in France. Page 12

Blow for Karadzic
The Bosnian peace talks have been told NATO is unlikely to agree to police any settlement that leaves the Bosnian Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic in place. Page 12



COMMENT

Nursery vouchers: Wandsworth Council's leader sings their praises. Page 21

Heaven Wilkinson: vents her wrath on the family fundamentalists. Page 21

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Another View: The Unification Church's view of their leader, Reverend Moon, who is banned from entering Britain. Page 20

Leading Article: "The case is now strong for an oil embargo against Nigeria." Page 20

Weather: It will be dry but rather cold over most parts of the United Kingdom. Eastern areas of England will be cloudy with showers. Section Two, page 33

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Cardinal's Intestine was one name suggested but Bishops Finger sounded so much more mouthwatering.

THE SERIOUS BEER WITH THE SILLY NAME.

news

Nolan furore: More backbenchers join revolt over Government refusal to back recommendation on outside earnings

Disclosure issue 'risks damaging Parliament'

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

A failure by MPs to back disclosure of MPs' earnings would damage the honour and reputation of Parliament in the eyes of the electorate, a member of the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life said yesterday.

The warning came as more Tory backbenchers joined the growing rebellion against the Government's refusal to go along with the original Nolan recommendation for disclosure.

Approaching two dozen MPs were yesterday prepared either to vote against the Government or abstain, threatening a cliffhanger vote in the House on Monday.

The MPs are, however, currently split into two groups, one arguing for disclosure with immediate effect and the other backing implementation after the next election.

Peter Thurnham, MP for Bolton North East, and Sir Teddy Taylor, MP for Southend East, were yesterday circulating a draft amendment for Monday's debate in the hope of garnering backing for an all-party amendment reflecting the latter position.

Meanwhile, Anthony King, Professor of Politics at Essex

University, was the first member of Lord Nolan's committee to speak out after Wednesday's report on implementation of its recommendations by a select committee of MPs.

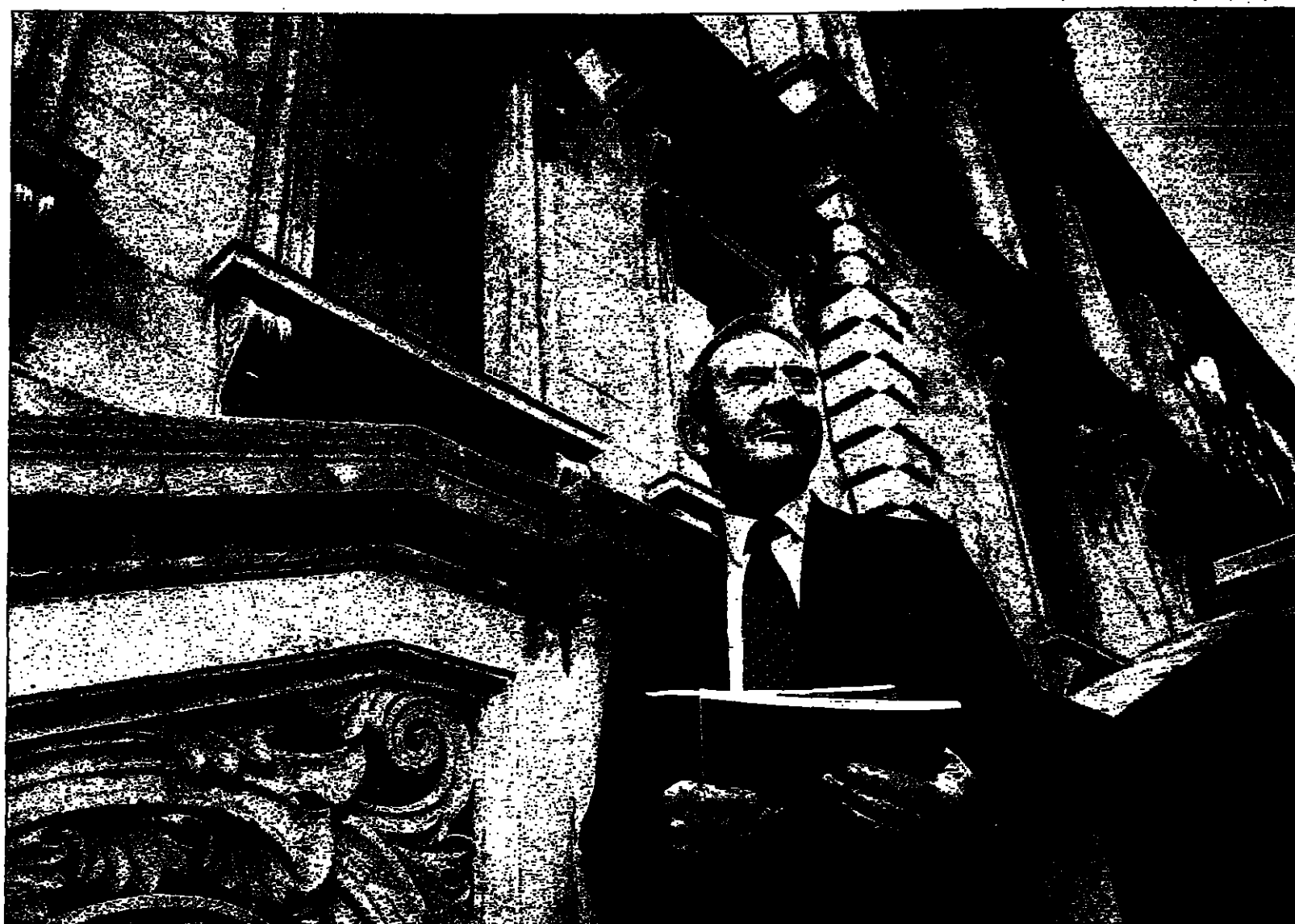
"The question here is one of the honour and reputation of parliament," Professor King said in an interview with BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*.

He said the issue had become party political – a view privately shared by some Tory MPs yesterday, who felt John Major has leapt too swiftly to the defence of the Conservative majority on the select committee.

Professor King said: "If the House of Commons does turn down this part of the Nolan committee's recommendations, then I am sure the Labour Party will go on hammering away at the Conservatives and I am sure a lot of voters will be deeply displeased. So it won't go away politically."

He said the select committee had produced a "very impressive report, but the paid advocacy ban would not stop MPs lurching with or chatting to ministers."

Professor King's stance was soon contradicted by another Nolan committee member, Tom King, the former Conservative cabinet minister, at Prime Minister's Questions – although he



Standards bearer: Lord Nolan outside his office in King Charles Street, central London, yesterday

Photograph: Dillon Bryden

was the only Tory backbencher to defend non-disclosure as Labour MPs launched an onslaught on Mr Major.

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, challenged the Prime Minister: "Having set up Nolan and having agreed to implement it, what possible justification are you going to give when you come to the House of Commons on Monday, along with

the Cabinet and the Government, and vote down its key recommendation – the simple, honest requirement that Members of Parliament who have outside financial interests connected with their being MPs should disclose the amount of money they earn from them. What do you and your party have to hide?"

The advocacy ban reverses

the inroads made by rules on the Register of Members' Interests on the so-called 1947 Resolution, which outlaws MPs selling their services.

But the Conservative-dominated select committee made only a limited attempt to stop MPs circumventing it in Wednesday's report – a provision that any delegations to ministers or officials introduced by

an MP with a declarable interest should be recorded in the Register of Members' Interests. Letters and other forms of contact are not mentioned.

Labour claims that many MPs will get round the advocacy ban by getting contracts with outside interests defined as purely advisory.

Labour also argued yesterday that the select committee report

had simply banned advocacy under contracts obliging MPs to lobby on behalf of the interests they represented. It did not address the issue tackled by Lord Nolan in his report, where he said: "the [1947] resolution does not prohibit members from voluntarily speaking, lobbying or voting in support of their clients' interest if the members think it right to do so."

Ofcom forced to tone down attack on Blair's internet deal with BT

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

Tony Blair's eye-catching deal with BT to cable up schools, hospitals and libraries to the information superhighway for free was attacked by the telecom regulator yesterday for increasing the company's monopoly power.

However, Don Cruickshank, director general of Ofcom, was forced to withdraw part of his attack, after Labour responded furiously, insisting it would not give BT special rights.

Mr Cruickshank claimed in a BBC radio interview on Wednesday night that the Labour-BT deal promoted monopoly and said: "I think schools should have a choice. They should not be obliged to hook up to BT."

But within hours he was forced to issue a clarification, after Labour insisted it did not want to give BT exclusive rights.

In his Brighton conference speech last month Mr Blair, the Labour leader, announced that he had agreed to allow BT to sell broadband services – TV channels and computer data – on its network from 2002 in return for social benefits.

A spokesman for Mr Blair

said it was "totally absurd" to suggest that Labour was trying to give BT monopoly rights. "It would be open to cable companies to bid to link up schools and hospitals as well," he said. Labour wanted "more competition in the market" and it was the Government which was preventing it, he said.

Margaret Beckett, Labour's spokeswoman for trade and in-

dustrial, said she was surprised by Mr Cruickshank's comments. "What Labour is doing is promoting competition by lifting the prohibition to allow BT into the market for cable companies."

Mr Cruickshank was on holiday at the time of Mr Blair's conference speech, and was not consulted, but a briefing note issued by the Labour Party with the text of the speech

says nothing about restricting access to BT. It makes it clear that the party planned "to require BT, the cable companies and others" to ensure that "the whole country is linked to the new network".

The cable companies are already offering schools free access to their networks, and they were disappointed by the hype attached to BT's "self-interest"

offer. However, a spokesman for the cable companies association yesterday said "relations with the Labour Party are very good".

But Mr Cruickshank stood part of his ground yesterday, saying cabling schools and hospitals was a social issue which should not be tied up with the competition issue – the question of when BT should be allowed to sell TV services on its network.

The Government has banned the giant privatised company from doing so until at least 2002 in order to protect the cable companies from BT's market power while they establish themselves in the market.

Ian Taylor, technology minister, said: "Effectively Blair is allowing BT into the broadcast market without the precondition of competition which we have applied."

But Graham Allen, a Labour frontbencher involved in the negotiations with both BT and the cable companies, said: "Currently we have a cable monopoly. The last thing we want to do is substitute a BT monopoly for a cable monopoly."

The cable companies claim to have already invested £5bn in creating a national network, capable of carrying high-capacity data and TV channels.

The BT deal, what they said

Tony Blair, speech to Labour conference, Brighton, 3 October: "In return for access to the market, I can announce BT has agreed, as they build up their network, to connect up every school, every college, every hospital and every library in Britain. For free."

Sir Iain Vallance, BT chairman, 3 October: "We strongly believe we can make a tremendous contribution to improving the delivery of public services and in particular health and education."

BT spokesman, 3 October: "It's not a deal, it's more of a concept."

Iain Lang, President of the Board of Trade, 5 October: "If there is a deal, it cannot be seen to be in the public interest. Competition and choice best serve the consumer, not private sweetheart deals with one company that undermine the others."

Lord Tebbit, BT director and former Tory Cab-

inet minister, 5 October: "On this occasion Mr Blair is proposing to do something which I think is correct and in the interests of the country as a whole, not just of BT."

Don Cruickshank, Ofcom director general, 1 November: "I am against the monopolistic element, certainly [of the Labour-BT deal]. I think schools should have a choice. They should not be obliged to hook up to BT."

Tony Blair's spokesman, 1 November: "It would be open to cable companies to bid to link up schools and hospitals as well. Labour wants more competition in the market."

Don Cruickshank, 2 November: Ofcom "will have nothing to do with monopolistic or exclusive supply by BT, and I am glad that the Labour Party agrees with this."

Ian Taylor, technology minister, 2 November: "If I as a minister had done a deal as bad as Tony Blair did with BT, I'd be sacked on the spot."

Pension deferral plan may solve care dilemma

NICHOLAS TIMMONS
Public Policy Editor

A scheme that would allow pensioners to defer part of their pension on retirement in order to provide them with cover if they need long-term care has emerged as a package of measures to tackle the mounting crisis in how to fund long-term care for the elderly.

The deferred pension would go into a tax exempt fund which would pay out higher benefits if the pensioner of their spouse required long-term care – either in their own home or in a nursing or residential home.

The idea is one of the ways ministers are likely to honour the promise to examine "the more flexible use of pensions" that the Prime Minister promised in his party conference speech last month.

Other measures under consideration include promising free long-term care where people agree to meet the cost of the first three years themselves.

That could be paid for by an insurance package taken while at work, one bought using part of the lump sum which accompanies many private sector pensions or by individuals using their own savings to cover three years' worth of care.

Once that was exhausted, the state would pick up the bill but crucially would do so without a means-test – allowing people to keep their houses and pass any other remaining inheritance on to their heirs.

The scheme – similar to packages already developed in New York state and in Connecticut in the United States – is being studied by Peter Lilley, the Secretary of State for Social Security, as part of a government-wide review on how to fund long-term care in the future in the face of an increase of 3 million in those past retirement age between now and the year 2025.



Peter Lilley: has options over long-term care crisis

Other options being considered include allowing those nearing retirement to pay more than the present statutory maximum into a pension fund, on condition the cash is clearly earmarked for long-term care should that prove necessary.

At present between one in six and one in eight pensioners end their days in long term care.

An announcement of the first moves to ease the looming crisis in long-term care is expected in Kenneth Clarke's budget later this month. The Chancellor, however, is resisting pressure to introduce tax relief on premiums for long-term care insurance.

Other options ministers have examined include a short-term easing of the means-test for residential and nursing care so that people would start to receive help when their savings have been run down to £16,000, rather than the current £8,000, and allowing people to sell their homes and put the capital into trust when they enter residential care.

The interest would be used to contribute to home fees, but the capital could be inherited. Both measures, however, would increase social security spending.

IN BRIEF

Stalker recaptured by armed police

A prisoner who stalked an MP's personal assistant was recaptured yesterday by armed police after escaping from a mental hospital.

Dale Morris, 29, who is ordered to be detained indefinitely under the Mental Health Act, became obsessed with Louise Hobkinson – an ex-model and former researcher for the Conservative MP Bill Cash.

Morris disappeared from Menzies House at Leek, Staffordshire, on Tuesday night and was reported to be armed with a shotgun. Police arrested him in Hatfield, Staffordshire. No firearm was found.

A-level surgery

An inquiry has been launched into why a 17-year-old work experience student was allowed to stitch a patient's wounds on two occasions at Bradford Royal Infirmary. On the first occasion the A-level pupil was shown how to stitch a patient by a senior house officer and put two stitches into the woman's leg. A week later, he put another three stitches into her leg.

Shotgun appeal fails

Ted Newbury, 83, of Ilkerton, Derbyshire, lost his appeal against a court ruling that he must pay over £4,000 damages to an intruder he unintentionally blasted with a shotgun while defending a shed on his allotment.

Rail trees saved

Campaigners have forced Railtrack to back down from a decision to fell more than 700 trees along the Guildford to Reading line. Sixty oak and silver birches will be untouched and the rest of the trees will be coppiced to a height of three feet.

Robbery alert

Ports and airports were on full alert for a pair of "violent organised thieves" believed to be trying to flee after a £500,000 jewellery robbery at a West End antique jeweller in which a 47-year-old assistant was pistol-whipped.

Ulster troops leave

Troop levels in Northern Ireland are to be cut again in the wake of the terrorist ceasefires. About 600 men of 45 Commando Royal Marine, based in the border region of Co Fermanagh for the past six months, are due to leave the province at the end of the month and will not be replaced.

Helpline launched

The Samaritans launched a new £5m telephone network yesterday to ensure callers are never faced with an engaged tone. The number, 0345 944490, is available for the price of a local call.

Cancer screening

Almost a quarter more breast cancers can be detected by taking two X-rays during routine screening rather than the one mammogram which has been the usual practice, according to a study at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London published in the *British Medical Journal*.

Peter Brooke: an apology

Peter Brooke, Conservative MP for the City of London and Westminster South, asks us to point out that he has never been divorced or separated. His first wife died in 1985. He remarried in 1991. We apologise for our error.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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W. & J. GRAHAM'S
PORT

Bank rejects ferret fanciers

PETER VICTOR

A bitter row blew up yesterday as ferret fanciers fell foul of ethical investment policies at the Co-op Bank.

Members of a Bedfordshire-based welfare group for *mustela furo* (the ferret) yesterday described the bank as "barbaric" for refusing to allow them to open an account because it said they were supporters of a "cruel" sport.

One ferret fancier, Mary Neale, said she was shocked when the bank turned down her

application to open an account for the Bedford Ferret Welfare Society which raises thousands of pounds to pay vets' bills and support abandoned animals.

Managers at the bank's Luton Business Centre said ferrets were used to hunt rabbits and the group should take its business elsewhere.

Ms Neale, from Bedford, said: "As a society we are interested in promoting the welfare of ferrets. The money we raise from racing events, fairs and donations is all used to help animals that have been ill-treated.

Many of us aren't involved in ferreting for rabbits. But those who do are often brought in by farmers or gardeners who see it as the most humane form of culling. It's just a completely barney decision."

David Smith, spokesman for the Co-op Bank, said: "We won't support anyone involved in blood sport, that means the use of animals or birds to capture, fight or kill other animals. We consulted the League Against Cruel Sports... and we ranked it alongside fox-hunting as a cruel sport."

Howard

Cellnet and

Every one a winner: The sportswriters' choice of the top 100 sports men and women



George Best
Football genius, pop icon

2 Ian Botham
The people's cricketer



3 Linford Christie
Intense, peerless sprinter



12 Mary Rand
Pentathlete



- 4 Bobby Moore - Footballer
- 5 Lester Piggott - Jockey
- 6 Jim Clark - Racing driver
- 7 Daley Thompson - Decathlete
- 8 Bob Coe - Middle distance runner
- 9 Dr. W.G. Grace - Cricketer
- 10 Brian Clough - Footballer
- 11 Sir Roger Bannister - Four-minute miler
- 12 Mary Rand - Pentathlete
- 13 David Gower - Cricketer
- 14 Jackie Stewart - Racing driver
- 15 Fred Perry - Tennis player
- 16 Frank Bruno - Boxer
- 17 Kenny Dalglish - Footballer
- 18 Gareth Edwards - Rugby player
- 19 Nick Faldo - Golfer
- 20 Red Rum - Racehorse
- 21 Sir Stanley Matthews - Footballer
- 22 Barry John - Rugby player

- 23 Sir Len Hutton - Cricketer
- 24 Sir Henry Cotton - Golfer
- 25 Sir Bobby Charlton - Footballer
- 26 Mary Peters - Pentathlete
- 27 Ken Buchanan - Boxer
- 28 Jimmy Greaves - Footballer
- 29 Harold Lawford - Cricketer
- 30 Henry Cooper - Boxer
- 31 Bill Shankly - Football manager
- 32 Steven Redgrave - Rower
- 33 Tony Jacklin - Golfer
- 34 Jack Steir - Football manager
- 35 Sir Jack Hobbs - Cricketer
- 36 Alex Higgins - Snooker player
- 37 Steve Crompton - Middle distance runner
- 38 Tom Finney - Footballer
- 39 Graham Hill - Racing driver
- 40 Gary Lineker - Footballer
- 41 Fred Truman - Cricketer

- 42 Sally Gunnell - Hurdler
- 43 Paul Gascoigne - Footballer
- 44 Dennis Compton - Cricketer
- 45 Jimmy White - Boxer
- 46 Eleri Hanley - Rugby league player
- 47 Ryan Giggs - Footballer
- 48 Nigel Bam - Boxer
- 49 Jonathan Edwards - Triple jumper
- 50 Mike Atherton - Cricketer
- 51 Mike Gibson - Rugby union player
- 52 Sterling Moss - Racing driver
- 53 Dennis Law - Footballer
- 54 Bob Champion and Aldrin - Jockey and his horse
- 55 Alan Knott - Cricketer
- 56 Jim Baxter - Footballer
- 57 Jonathan Davies - Rugby union and League player
- 58 Jim Lester - Cricketer
- 59 Rory Underwood - Rugby union player
- 60 Colin Jackson - Hurdler
- 61 Ann Jones - Tennis player
- 62 Willie John McBride - Rugby union player
- 63 Tommy Simpson - Cyclist
- 64 Bob Fitzsimmons - Boxer
- 65 Virginia Wade - Tennis
- 66 Rob Andrew - Rugby union player
- 67 David Home - Hurdler
- 68 Barry Lynch - Boxer
- 69 Nigel Mansell - Racing driver
- 70 Barry Sheen - Motor cyclist
- 71 Graeme Obree - Cyclist

- 72 Randolph Turpin - Boxer
- 73 Eric Liddell - Sprinter
- 74 C.B. Fry - Cricketer, Footballer and long jumper
- 75 Jimmy White - Snooker player
- 76 Gavin Hastings - Rugby union player
- 77 Naseem Hamed - Boxer
- 78 Jim Fox - Pentathlete
- 79 Joe Davis - Snooker player
- 80 Tessa Sanderson - Javelin thrower
- 81 Tom Morris and Tom Morris Jr. - Golfers
- 82 Bob Paisley - Football manager
- 83 Geoff Boycott - Cricketer
- 84 Sam Torrance - Golfer
- 85 Carl Fogarty - Motor cyclist
- 86 Beryl Burton - Cyclist
- 87 John Surtees - Motor cyclist and racing driver
- 88 Mike Haskwood - Motor cyclist and racing driver
- 89 David Wilkie - Swimmer
- 90 Johnny Leach - Table tennis player
- 91 Laura Davies - Golfer
- 92 Roy Rance - Canton footballer
- 93 Jonathan Barrington - Squash player
- 94 Alison Fisher - Snooker player
- 95 Sean Kitley - Hockey player
- 96 Rachel Heyhoe-Fleet - Cricketer
- 97 Tony and Dean - Ice skaters
- 98 Bob Nudd - Champion angler
- 99 Mike McManus - Wrestler
- 100 Duncan Goodhew - Swimmer

Best takes top spot in the league of heroes

JOHN MCKIE

It promises to start countless pub arguments but that was part of the intention. When *Total Sport* magazine polled 1,000 sports writers, broadcasters and former stars for their favourite British Sports Heroes of all time for its first issue, there were bound to be some controversial verdicts. People polled included Gary Lineker, Bill Beaumont, Geoff Boycott, Des Lynam, Brough Scott and Harry Carpenter. They voted George Best into first place, with Ian Botham second, Linford Christie third, Bobby Moore fourth and Lester Piggott fifth. Among the exclusions in the list of 100 favourites are legends including Graham Gooch, Geoff Hurst and Robin Cousins. Danny Kelly, who left the

music magazine *Q* to edit *Total Sport*, said: "Yes, it's going to infuriate people, but that's no bad thing. The poll was about sporting heroes and that's why George Best is at number one. He seemed to reflect something marvellous about this country in the Sixties... He may have indulged in a lot of drink and women but it was a life a lot of us would like to have lived. From numbers two to five in our poll were very close but George Best won by a long way." The poll reflects popular heroes rather than champions. Steve Davis won six World Snooker titles but does not feature in the top 100. Alex "Hurricane" Higgins, only twice world champion, is at number 36 and Jimmy White, who has never won the world title, is at number 75.

Mr Kelly acknowledged that the ages of those who voted were also a factor and the result, given the high prominence of George Best and the 1966 World Cup hero Bobby Moore in the top five. The highest placed woman, Mary Rand, was voted into 12th place because of her heroics in the 1964 Olympics, where she won a gold medal in the long jump, silver in the pentathlon and bronze in the sprint relay. Other women to perform well included another pentathlete, Mary Peters, (26) the current track star Sally Gunnell (42) and former Wimbledon champions Ann Jones (61) and Virginia Wade (65).

The highest placed non-human is the recently deceased Red Rum (20), although at number 54 Aldrin shares a mention with the jockey Bob Champion MBE. Kelly admitted that it was not just the personality of the star which influenced the votes but their panache with which they carried out their day jobs. "I don't think I'd want to spend a lot of time down the pub with Ian Botham but he made an Australian cricket captain cry and, not to be too jingoistic about it, that's no bad thing in my book." Current heroes, like the boxer Naseem Hamed (77) and the footballer Ryan Giggs (47) are included, although both are in their early twenties. England's rugby union captain Will Carling, who is not included, will be less than delighted to see the inclusion of teammates Rory Underwood (59) and Rob Andrew (66). However, the Princess of Wales was not among those polled.

Howard 'toeing EU line' by combating asylum seekers

HEATHER MILLS
Home Affairs Correspondent

Michael Howard was last night embroiled in a fresh controversy over his plans to clamp down on asylum seekers after documents revealed that the Euro-sceptic Home Secretary had already secretly agreed them with other European ministers. News that Mr Howard is actually implementing a harmonised European immigration and asylum policy will greatly embarrass the Home Secretary, who only last month boasted

to his party conference: "Our immigration policy will be decided here in Britain. And not in Brussels. We will never surrender control of our frontiers." In fact, the two key proposals in the forthcoming Immigration and Asylum Bill to be included in next week's Queen's Speech were agreed behind closed doors in Europe - one as long ago as 1992. Documents seen by the *Independent* show that even the advice recently given to Conservative MPs on how to deal with any criticism of the policy was based

on guidelines from the EU, issued by the president's office. Although the resolutions are not legally binding on member states, governments are obliged to "strive to bring their national legislation into line by January 1996". That is exactly what Mr Howard is doing. Last night, there was anger on Mr Howard's own back benches that the Government was "on the one hand professing to belong to a Europe of nation states, while on the other engaging in secret integration". Richard Shepherd, MP for

Aldridge-Brownhills, said: "It is a scandal that issues as fundamental as immigration and asylum should be being decided in such an undemocratic and secret fashion." Senior Home Office sources rejected claims that Mr Howard was merely adopting European policy. "These resolutions were agreed to on the basis they did not conflict with developing proposals for stemming the flow of illegal immigration into Britain," the source said. "The resolutions are not legally binding and the Government has

successfully prevented immigration decision-making at a European level." But Jack Straw, shadow Home Secretary, accused Mr Howard of "lying the Union Jack white following the European stars". "It is a nice irony that a Euro-sceptic Home Secretary is having his own asylum policy driven by a 'fortress Europe' group in Brussels." These revelations follow the British government's acquiescence to a common visa list which will impose visitors' visas on up to 30 Commonwealth

countries for which they are not required at the moment." The first of the two key proposals of the new Bill is the drawing up of a so-called "white list" of countries, deemed to be "safe" and therefore unlikely to produce real refugees. It was, in fact, first adopted by EU home affairs ministers at a meeting in London in 1992. The second - the abolition of full appeal rights to those refugees arriving via a safe third country, for example France - appears in an EU resolution, adopted by Mr Howard

in Luxembourg in June, four months before his party conference speech. In the face of widespread opposition from employers organisations and welfare groups, the Government is apparently rethinking its proposed third plank - to fine employers who hire illegal immigrants. Richard Dunstan, refugee officer for Amnesty International, said: "Michael Howard appears to be trying to have his cake and eat it. On the one hand he played to the Euro-sceptic gallery at the Conservative party

conference by pledging that EU policy will be determined here in Britain. But on the other hand he is set to introduce legislation that is derived entirely from EU documents drawn up by a secretive cabal of EU officials." He said the process was producing common EU asylum policy based on the lowest common denominator. "It falls short of international standards, lacks essential safeguards and will therefore undermine the international community's system for protecting refugees."

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news

Tycoon 'sent son on missions to mislead'

JOHN WILLCOCK
Financial Correspondent

Robert Maxwell used his son Kevin to send "misleading messages" to the City of London, banks and others on dozens of occasions, the Old Bailey fraud trial was told yesterday.

Kevin was being questioned by Alan Suckling QC, for the prosecution, about the "deliberate lie" he told to the Bank of Nova Scotia on instructions from his father.

In a series of angry clashes, Kevin denied that he and his father had knowingly put pension funds at risk for their own self-

The Maxwell Trial



Day 95

ish reasons. He did say that he had misled institutions in 1991, and before that, on the instructions of his father.

Kevin told the court, on his 14th day in the witness box, that

he wished he had stood up to his father, but instead did as he was told and later had to apologise to the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Asked if he had told any other lies, he said he had not, but added: "Over the years I was involved in dozens of presentations to City institutions, to banks and all kinds of third parties. At the end of the day, my father was responsible for the script or messages being delivered, and some of the messages were not lies but certainly they could have been seen to have been misleading to the market." Kevin assured the jury that he was an "honest man".

Questioned about £1m worth of shares in the Israeli company Sciter, which the prosecution alleges belong to the pensioners, he insisted he had seen an amended document in which the beneficial ownership of the shares was transferred to the Robert Maxwell Group (RMG).

He said his father showed him the amended document in his office and he believed that Bishopgate Investment Management, which administered the pension fund, had transferred the beneficial ownership to RMG.

The publisher's youngest son said he only saw the document

briefly at a late-night meeting in his father's office, but accepted what he was told about it. Mr Suckling said: "Why? It stank, didn't it?"

In an angry outburst, Kevin Maxwell accused him of using an emotive word, saying it was easy to say that with the benefit of hindsight after the crash.

He went on: "I had implicit faith in my father and I trusted him. I had years of experience of working with him, of his methods, that included transactions involving pension fund assets. It was the ordinary course of business for him and I accepted it."

Mr Suckling said: "This meeting never took place, did it, Mr Maxwell?"

Kevin Maxwell: "Mr Suckling, you have to say that. My defence has not changed for years. I saw the amended agreement. I believe it was valid."

He raised his voice in anger when Mr Suckling asked him what had happened to the document. "I can't believe you are asking me that question. We have been denied access to the papers. We have looked everywhere we have been allowed to."

He accused the prosecution and the Serious Fraud Office of denying him and his defence

team access to all the documents.

Earlier, Kevin had told the jury he did not consider the pension fund had been in any way put at risk over the Sciter deal.

When Mr Suckling suggested that any independent pension fund manager would have had to have lost his senses, or been dishonest, to hand over the shares to RMG, Kevin disagreed.

He said that although in 1991, when the shares were sold, RMG was facing liquidity problems and was in "choppy water", it was not in bad shape because it had assets

worth many millions of pounds. Answering Mr Suckling's question, he said: "Did I, for a second, consider we were jeopardising the ability to pay pensions? Absolutely not."

In another angry exchange, Kevin said: "I am telling a consistent story which is the truth. You are a prosecutor who wants to send me to jail and you want me to say something different. I am not going to help you."

Kevin, his brother Ian, and former Maxwell financial adviser Larry Trachtenberg deny conspiracy to defraud the pension fund by misusing shares. The trial continues today.

Vote of confidence in future of rubbish-to-power brokers

The Government is investing in new technology to help meet energy needs

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

A boost for renewable energy, including wind farms and electricity-generating waste incinerators, was announced by the Government yesterday.

Bids will be sought from the private sector for a further 500 megawatts of electrical power to be provided by non-fossil fuel and non-nuclear sources. This is equivalent to about half the output of a large, conventional power station.

The companies whose bids succeed will be guaranteed a stable price for their electricity for 15 years, set above today's market price for power. This renewables subsidy is paid for by electricity consumers, and it adds just over one per cent to their bills.

The winning projects picked by the Government will be those which demand the lowest subsidy and succeed in convincing the Department of Trade and Industry that they have sound prospects of financial backing. Bids will be invited from next month but the winners - expected to number around 100 - will not be announced until 1997.

This is the fourth time the Government has staged such an auction and it is leading to a rapid expansion in UK renewable energy. The first wind farm opened four years ago in Cornwall and now there are 30

of them, with about 500 electricity-generating turbines. Yet they still generate little more than one thousandth of Britain's power.

But the form of renewable energy which has expanded most rapidly is the use of inflammable methane gas, generated by rotting rubbish in landfill tips. Collected in a network of perforated pipes buried in the waste, the gas is then used to fuel engines attached to electricity generators.

For the first time, some of the subsidy contracts in this auction round will be awarded to combined heat and power projects - power stations which also provide hot water and space heating for thousands of nearby homes and businesses via underground hot water pipes.

These are expected to take the form of three or four large municipal rubbish incinerators. If they provide heat as well as electricity, they can work much more efficiently and convert far more of the energy in the rubbish into a useful product.

The Government set up the subsidy scheme for renewables because they cause either no pollution or much less than fossil fuels and they give Britain a greater diversity of energy supplies. Its target is for 1,500 megawatts of new renewables to be installed by the year 2000, in addition to the 1,500 megawatts of hydroelectric power schemes which Britain already has.



Waste not, want not: Government endorsement could mean a bright future for the South East London Combined Heat and Power plant

Photograph: Geraint Lewis

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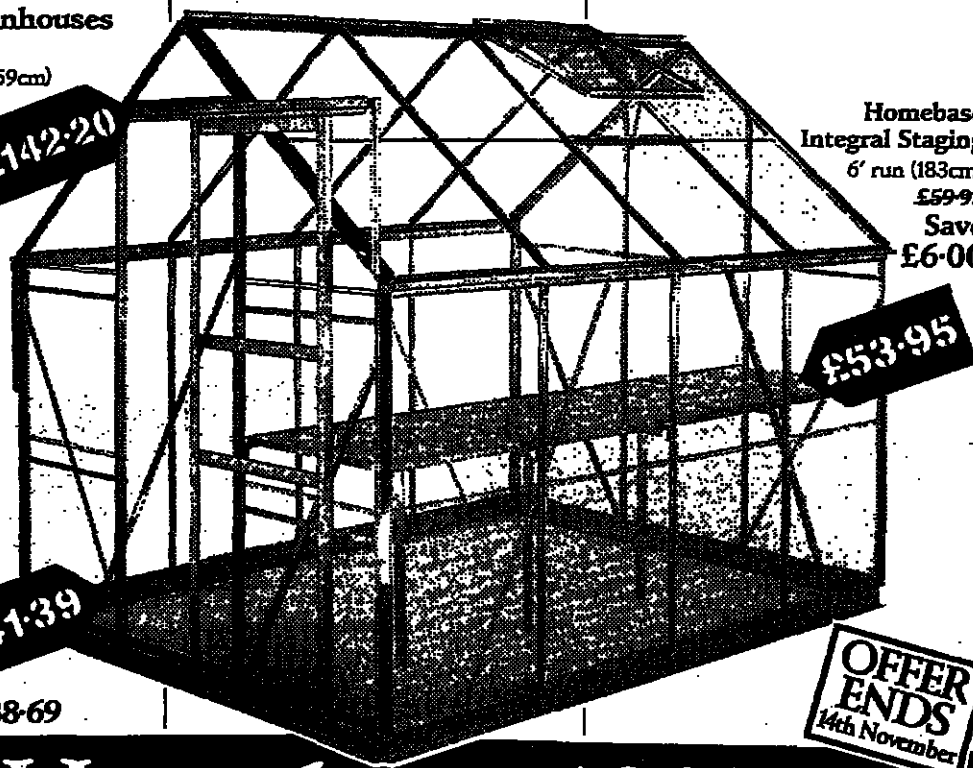
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1520 11/3

Home Office ban: Despite a court victory, the controversial cleric disappoints his followers in face of Howard's opposition

Moonies' leader cancels his visit to Britain

DANNY PENMAN

The Moonies' founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, yesterday cancelled his visit to Britain after the Home Secretary refused to lift a ban on his entry to the UK.

On Wednesday, the Unification Church won a legal victory over Michael Howard, when the High Court ordered him to reconsider the block on Mr Moon's visit.

But Mr Howard, speaking on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme yesterday, ruled out lifting the ban.

The Home Secretary said: "The ban is still in force. The ban has not been set aside. I do not intend to set it aside." The Home Office said it was quite happy to receive a fresh application from Mr Moon, but added: "We do not intend to set the ban aside."

The apparent refusal by the Home Office to reconsider the ban has angered the church's leaders. Mark Brann, president of its UK branch, said: "We regard it as a very serious matter when you have a Home Secretary who says he's the guardian of the law and then goes ahead and effectively disregards it."

Mr Moon was due to arrive in Britain today and hold a service for 1,200 followers in central London tomorrow. The church claims 700 followers in the UK and about 4m worldwide.

Members of the church claim to be Christian, but elements of



In the name of the father: Rev Sun Myung Moon (left) and his worldwide church believe followers should take part in mass 'arranged marriage' ceremonies, at which he and his wife officiate

Confucianism and Buddhism are both incorporated into its teachings. It has been the target of allegations that it has broken up families and also that it has "brain-washed" followers. Home Office statistics paint a

different picture and show that few of those initially attracted to the church join it, and that 90 per cent of those who do join leave within two years.

Mr Moon is the central figure of the church and his ex-

clusion will prove a deep disappointment to his followers.

Mr Brann said: "If you regard someone as your spiritual leader and inspiration, then it's a great disappointment if he's excluded from the country."

"Mr Howard should not interfere with religious freedom. He's our Secretary of State as well - not just the Secretary of State for *Mail on Sunday* or *Daily Mail* readers."

The Moonies are now plan-

ning to try and build a more persuasive case over the coming weeks in an attempt to persuade the Home Secretary to grant Mr Moon an entry visa.

Mr Brann said members of the church were planning to re-

cruit "Nobel Laureates and statesmen to their cause."

He also dismissed the allegations used by the Home Secretary to justify the refusal of an entry visa to Mr Moon.

"It's certainly unfortunate

that the church in its immaturity experienced a number of mistakes and that is entirely regrettable. Unfortunately, that reflects badly on our founder, who never had any intention of breaking up families."

NHS chief attacks bleak prediction of future cost

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

Alan Langlands, the NHS chief executive, yesterday attacked the "gloom and doom" view that the NHS cannot be afforded and that both rationing and privatisation of the health service is inevitable.

In a straightforward rebuke to Sir Duncan Nichol, his predecessor, and Rodney Walker, the outgoing chair of the NHS Trust Federation, Mr Langlands said he wanted to "distance himself" from what he

dubbed the "ration-and-privatise brigade".

Launching the NHS annual report, Mr Langlands said there would always be a gap between everything the NHS might wish to do and what was possible. Choices had to be made and setting priorities was "a fact of life".

But that reality was "neither new nor peculiar to the health service". He did not find the arguments in Sir Duncan's *Healthcare 2000* report "terribly convincing", and accused Mr Walker of appearing to "talk up some sort of immediate crisis". The NHS was under "significant pressure", Mr Langlands said, but the service was coping, "with good ideas about changing the way things are done".

The pressures of an ageing population, medical advance and heightened expectations were not new, Mr Langlands said, "and the NHS has been responding to them successfully for many years".

Over the next five to 10 years, the population "is not

ageing at a pace that we won't be able to cope" given the real terms growth the NHS has been promised. The numbers of people over 85 - whose care on average costs 10 times as much annually as those aged 16 to 44 - were set to rise from only 1.6 per cent of the population to 2.1 per cent between 1990 and 2000.

There were problems over expensive new drugs, but other advances such as minimally invasive surgery and the possible development of artificial bone saved money.

His comments came as Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, praised the Greater Glasgow Health Board for shifting its contracts for breast surgery to six named consultants whose results provided a 10 per cent better survival rate. It has also restricted treatment of testicular cancer to one hospital with more successful treatment.

NHS Annual Report 1994/5. Free. Telephone 0800 555 777.



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news

Young women tell of attacks by Fred West

Rosemary West trial: Witnesses describe builder's terrifying stalking tactics

WILL BENNETT

Frederick West drove around alone following girls and sometimes assaulting girls and young women, Winchester Crown Court was told yesterday.

Seven women said that they recognised Mr West as the man who had followed or attacked them on his own when his photograph appeared in the media after his arrest last year.

Another witness said that on several occasions he had seen Mr West sitting in a car with Mary Bastholm, who disappeared in Gloucester in 1968.

Mr West's widow Rosemary, 41, denies murdering 10 girls and young women whose remains were found at their house at 25 Cromwell Street, Gloucester, and at their previous home in the city. Her husband, who was charged with 12 murders, was found dead in his prison cell on 1 January this year.

Mrs West has told the court that she was not involved in the murders.

Yesterday a witness described in court as Mrs C said that she was picked up by Mr West when she was hitch-hiking in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, in 1966. Shortly afterwards he turned off the main road.

Mrs C said: "He pulled into a lane. He grabbed my body. I can't remember the precise details but it was a sexual and physical attack. He told me to take my knickers off."

"I managed to get halfway out of the car and he had his arm around my throat dragging me back into the car."

She remained fully dressed and Mr West masturbated in front of her. Afterwards she said he was "very charming, pleasant and joking" and took her back into Cheltenham.

Janette Clarke wept as she told the court that she had been followed when she had twice been followed by a man in Gloucestershire in 1966. When shown a photograph of Mr West in court she said: "Oh God, that's the one."

Alison Clinton described how she had been attacked by a man in 1968 when she was 13. She said: "He grabbed my wrist. I got free and ran to the nearest house." Twenty six years later she recognised Mr West's face on television after his arrest.

Caroline Langman said in a statement that in 1972 when she was 16 she was repeatedly followed by a blue van as she cycled home from school in Gloucester and that she later received an obscene telephone call. When she saw Mr West's photograph last year she "went very cold and felt very strange".

Julie Coulson described in a statement how she was attacked in Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, in 1975 aged 15. She said: "The man grabbed hold of my arm and tried to pull me into the car. I managed to get away and ran home."

A statement from Theresa Davies was read out in which she said that she was assaulted by a man who gave her a lift

near Stroud, Gloucestershire, in 1975 and who last year she recognised as Mr West.

She said: "He became more and more violent, punching me in the abdomen several times. Somehow I don't know how I managed to escape."

A woman referred to only as Mrs D said in a statement that she had recognised Mr West on television last year as the man who had masturbated in front of her and then assaulted her in Gloucester in 1975.

Vincent Oakes said in a statement that he had seen Mr West in a car with Mary Bastholm who disappeared in Gloucester in January 1968 on four or five occasions. He knew Mary, who was a neighbour, but did not recognise Mr West until after his arrest last year.

The last time Mr Oakes saw them together was just before Christmas shortly before Mary vanished. Nobody has ever been charged in connection with her disappearance.

The trial continues today.



Janette Clarke: Told Winchester Crown Court she had twice been followed by Fred West

Artist's impression: PA

Memoirs deal is 'repulsive', says Mackay

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Arts Reporter

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay, yesterday said the controversial decision by the Official Solicitor to sell Fred West's police interviews and memoirs was "repulsive".

In a separate development, the Chief Constable of Gloucestershire police, Tony Butler, also made clear his anger. He said that the deal, apparently done without his consent, raised "issues of grave public concern".

Their comments follow an admission by the Prime Minister two weeks ago that he felt "extreme distaste" for the biography brokered by the Official Solicitor, Peter Harris, with Hodder Headline for a six-figure sum.

Lord Mackay revealed his repugnance to Douglas French, the Conservative MP for Gloucester, who wants the book stopped. Mr French said: "The Lord Chancellor shares the public view that the sale is a most distasteful exercise. He described it as 'repulsive'. But he also said the Official Solicitor was probably acting within his powers."

Mr Harris commissioned the biography, to be written by Geoffrey Wansell and published next year, after West hanged himself in a Birmingham prison on New Year's Day while awaiting trial on 12 charges of murder.

The move raised a storm of protest and highlighted the legal loophole by which families of alleged criminals, particularly those who have died, can profit from their apparent misdeeds.

Mr Harris claims that as ex-

ecutor of West's estate, which includes 25 Cromwell Street, 132 tapes of police interviews, and West's autobiography, *I Was Loved By An Angel*, he was obliged to maximise his profits by commissioning the biography.

But in his first statement on the subject, Mr Butler yesterday made public his disapproval of the deal.

He said: "The use by an author of material produced by Gloucestershire Constabulary in the course of a criminal investigation, without the express authority of the constabulary, raises a number of issues of grave public concern."

"It goes without saying that there are important issues of confidentiality and I would not wish this proposal to be interpreted by the public as a suggestion that information they provide to us in the course of an investigation could subsequently find its way into a book."

Mr Butler added that he was seeking urgent legal advice whether such material, made available to prepare a defendant's case, could be used for "any other purpose that the accused person or their legal representative sees fit".

The legal questions highlighted by the deal are also to be pursued by Mr French, who has been urged by Lord Mackay to discuss them with the Home Secretary, Michael Howard.

"The Lord Chancellor has invited me to come forward with some proposals, which could be put in a private member's bill or taken up the Government, to stop this happening in future. Clearly he would be sympathetic to that," the MP added.

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DAILY POEM

The Send-Off

By Wilfred Owen

Down the close, darkening lanes they sang their way
To the siding-shed,
And lined the train with faces grimly gay.

Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray
As men's are, dead.

Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp
Stood staring hard,
Sorry to miss them from the upland camp.
Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp
Winked to the guard.

So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.
They were not ours:
We never heard to which front these were sent.

Nor there if they yet mock what women meant
Who gave them flowers.

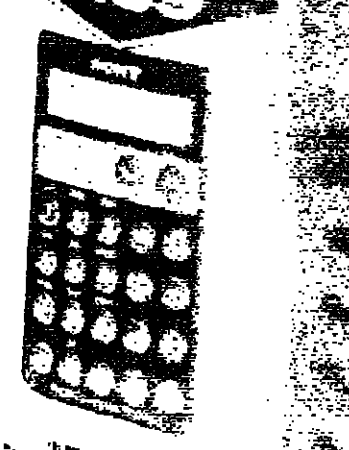
Shall they return to beatings of great bells
In wild train-loads?
A few, a few, too few for drums and yells,
May creep back, silent, to still village wells
Up half-known roads.

Wilfred Owen was killed in battle on 4 November 1918, at the age of 25, seven days before the end of the First World War writes Catherine Barracough. The "war poems" were written between January 1917 and November 1918, and although only four were published in his lifetime, he has since been recognised as one of the major poets of the century. His verse, impassioned expressions of the "pity of war", had a rich musicality in advance of anything achieved by his peers. But his mature contribution to English poetry, and the promise of his ability to speak for a generation torn apart by war was never to be fulfilled. His death left a lamentable gap. A friend wrote in the 1950s: "I have found many letters lately of Wilfred Owen's, and looking back over the time since the last war, I see how much easier all our lives would have been if he had lived."

The War Poems of Wilfred Owen are published by Chatto at £4.99.

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Recipe for disaster: High-fat, high-sugar food inflicted on children is 'storing up a timebomb' of disease

School dinners 'can damage your health'

GLENDA COOPER

School dinners are bad for your health, according to the National Heart Forum (NHF). Too many secondary schools are providing meals that are high in fat and sugar and are putting children at risk of developing heart disease.

While children in the past grumbled about cannonball peas or wallpaper-paste mashed potatoes, today's children have an "appalling diet, high in consumption of the three C's: crisps, chips and confectionery", according to the NHF, which works to reduce levels of coronary heart disease. It is today launching a computer programme, the School Meals Assessment Pack (SMAP), to monitor and calculate the nutritional value of school meals.

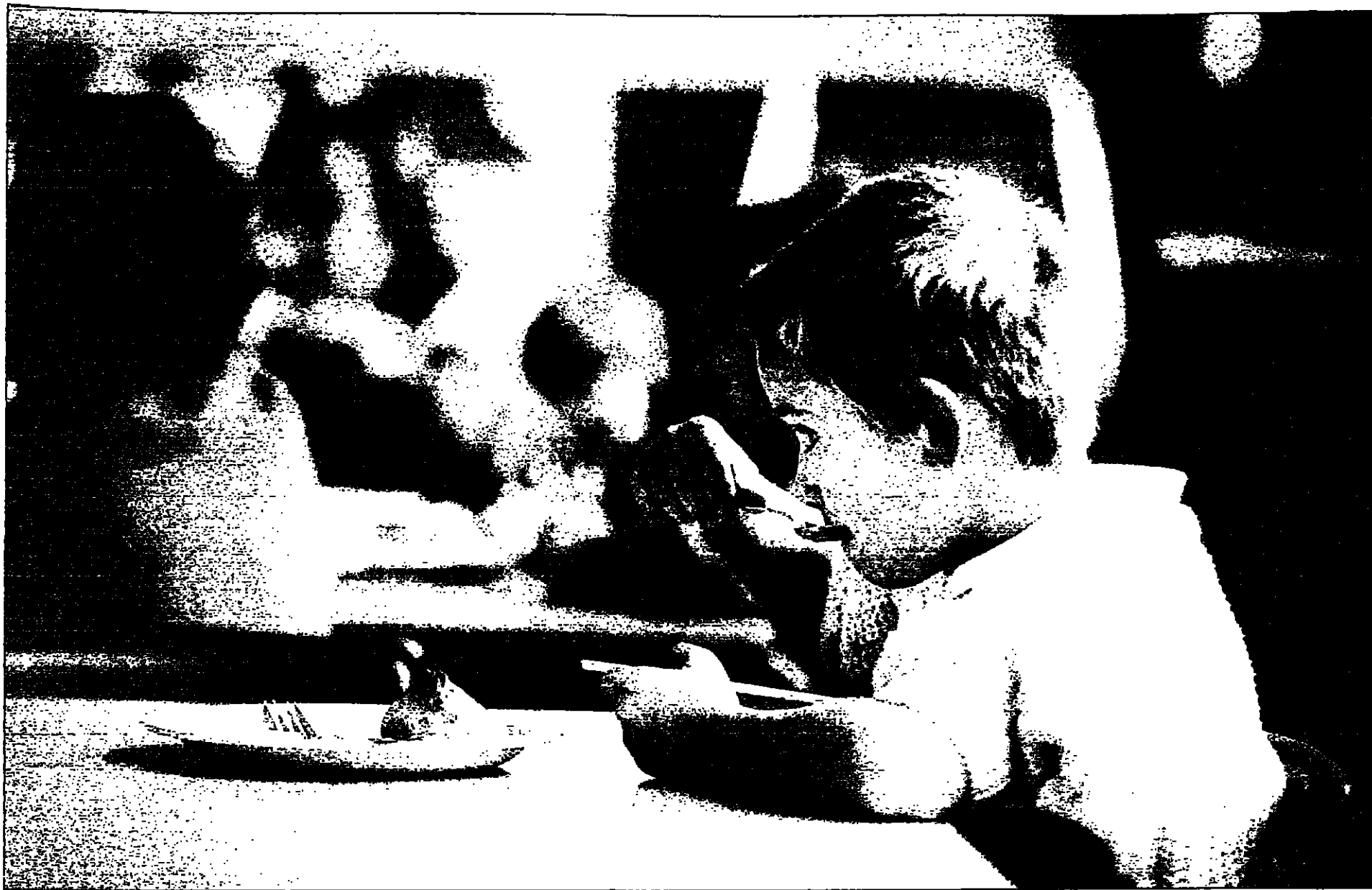
Children get a third of their energy from school meals, but despite government health strategies there has been no improvement in the diets of school children for 10 years. They typically eat food that is high in fat, high in sugar but low in fibre, calcium and iron. On average they eat chips at school three times a week.

The forum believes that the state of school meals, which are eaten by 45 per cent of children, has suffered because nutritional standards were abolished in 1980. This was exacerbated by the introduction of compulsory competitive tendering in 1988, which forced schools to put their catering service out to tender. This encouraged caterers to rely more on preprepared food and sugary snacks to cut costs.

SMAP consists of a user's guide for caterers in developing healthy menus and a teacher's pack for classroom use.

In pilot studies, SMAP found that 46 per cent of calories in school meals came from fat, compared with the Government recommended maximum of 35 per cent.

NHF chairman and leading cardiologist Professor Desmond Julian warned: "Coronary heart disease is the UK's single largest cause of premature death and the seeds of the disease are sown in childhood. It has been estimated that 30 per cent of deaths from the disease are due to an unhealthy diet. If we do not tackle this now, any progress this nation has made towards reducing



Food for thought: A youngster at Hotham Junior School, Putney, west London, tucks into his school dinner

Photograph: Geraint Lewin

our high rates of coronary heart disease will be reversed next century when the children of today become adults."

Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death in the UK, with over 170,000 deaths annually. Although rates of the disease in men aged 35 to 74 dropped 24 per cent between 1980 and 1990, other developed countries have seen the rate fall far faster.

Imogen Sharp, director of NHF, said the Government's Health of the Nation targets would not be met unless there was an improvement in the

school meals service. While ideally national nutritional standards would be reintroduced, she said that in the world of the "contract culture", local education authorities should insist that specific nutritional guidelines be included in all school catering contracts. All school food, including school meals, vending machines, tuck shops and playground vans should be given an annual health audit. The Department for Education should also ensure adequate financial support for school meals.

"Pupils and school governors need a system for assess-

ing the health value of their school meals service and parents need to be sure they are paying for nutritious school meals," she said. "About 4 million school lunches are served everyday yet there is little in the way of quality assurance for the service."

A 1994 report by NHF found that the average teenager consumes four packets of crisps, six cans of fizzy drinks, seven bars of chocolate, three bags of chips and seven puddings each week while eating only one seventh of the recommended intake of fruit and vegetables.

The NHF said that an un-

healthy diet can influence the development of dental disease, bowel disorders, nutritional anaemia and obesity. The number of obese children is estimated to have doubled between 1980 and 1990.

"The school meals service was developed at the beginning of this century to improve children's poor health," said Maggie Sanderson, of the British Dietetic Association. "The diseases may have changed but the question of diet-related ill health remains. Work on the diets of children in the next millennium has to begin now."

Bulimia article doctors cleared

Three doctors were yesterday found guilty of identifying a bulimia sufferer with a history of self-mutilation in a medical journal. But they were found not guilty of serious professional misconduct after deliberations lasting more than two hours at the General Medical Council in London.

Dr John Eagles of Bingham Park, Milltimber, Aberdeen, and Dr Jon Parkin, whose address was given as the Royal Cornhill Hospital, Aberdeen, had been accused of disclosing information in the paper about the condition of a patient, identified to the hearing as Ms C, without her informed consent and in such a way as to enable her to be identified.

Dr Alastair Palin, now of Noel Road, Islington, north London, was accused of providing information for the paper without obtaining Ms C's informed consent and in such a way as to enable her to be identified. He had been Ms C's psychiatrist.

Adrian Whitfield QC, representing Dr Eagles and Dr Parkin, the authors of the paper about 26-year-old Ms C, had told the hearing the article was not gratuitous or unreasonable and was an important contribution to an important topic.

Mr Whitfield argued that doctors doing research, especially in the field of psychiatry, faced inevitable dilemmas about how much detail of individual cases to give.

Simon Taylor, representing Dr Palin, said the committee had heard different versions of the meeting between his client and Ms C, where she said to have consented to be interviewed by Dr Parkin for the suggested paper *Blood-letting in Bulimia Nervosa*.

He asked the committee to accept evidence from Ms C's key worker at the time, Mrs Sally Hill, that Ms C had consented and was capable of doing so.

The doctors declined to comment on the outcome, but said: "We are naturally relieved that the GMC has found on the evidence none of us were guilty of misconduct and our duty of confidentiality remains. All we wish to say is that we regret any distress which has been caused to the complainant in this case."

Healthy menu

Lamb & Mushroom Pie
Beef Curry & Brown Rice
Bean and Cauliflower Bake
Tomato & Cheese Pizza
Jacket Potatoes
Cabbage
Mixed Salad
Grated Carrot
Tomato & Cucumber
Baked Apples
Fruit Yogurt
Crunchy Bars
Oranges

Unhealthy menu

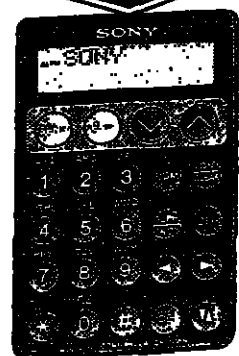
Battered Fish
Beefburger and Bap
Baked Sausages
Hot Dogs
Creamed Potato
Potato Waffles
Baked Beans
Chips
Roast Potatoes
Apple Crumble and Custard
Lemon Meringue
Chocolate Crisps
Doughnuts

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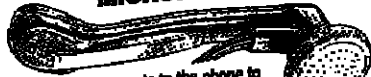
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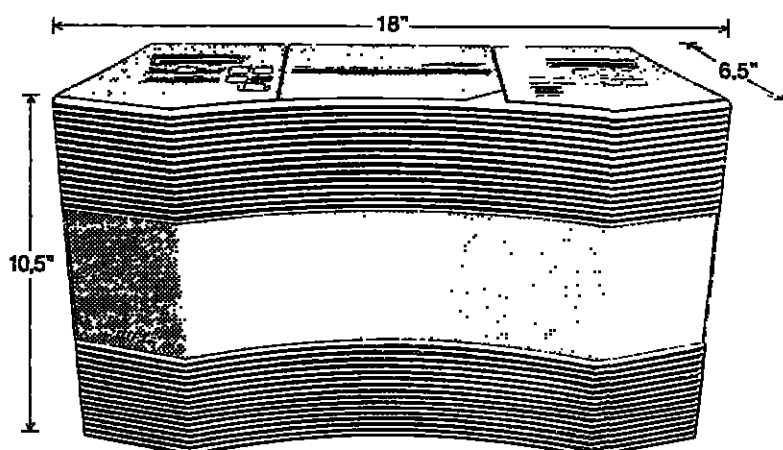
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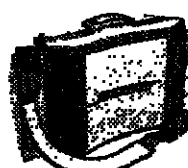
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TUNER STS-201, AUG '95 ISSUE. CD PLAYER CDP-701E, JULY '95 ISSUE. TAPE DECK TCK-601S, AWARDS '94. AMPLIFIER TAF-246E, SEPT '95 ISSUE. SPEAKERS SS-176E, OCT '95 ISSUE.

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Selling Britain

Who	What	How much
1. Virgin	100,000	£1.5m
2. EMI	80,000	£1.2m
3. Polygram	70,000	£1.1m
4. RCA	60,000	£1.0m
5. Warner	50,000	£0.9m
6. Mercury	40,000	£0.8m
7. Island	30,000	£0.7m
8. Decca	20,000	£0.6m
9. Parlophone	10,000	£0.5m
10. Nonesuch	5,000	£0.4m

UK to look after record

THE UK RECORDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (RIAA) HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL BE INTRODUCING A NEW SYSTEM OF CONTROLLING THE EXPORT OF RECORDS FROM THE UK. THE NEW SYSTEM WILL BE INTRODUCED IN 1996 AND WILL BE DESIGNED TO PREVENT THE UNLAWFUL EXPORT OF RECORDS FROM THE UK TO OTHER COUNTRIES. THE RIAA HAS SAID THAT THE NEW SYSTEM WILL BE A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN THE PROTECTION OF THE UK RECORDING INDUSTRY.



Performance

Selling Britain abroad: Industry faces increased challenges as soaring revenue disguises nation's loss of share in world market

Who visits the United Kingdom					
	Visits		Expenditure		
	1994	%	1994	%	
	thousands	change	£m	change	
Scandinavia	1,326	+5	501	-3	
Benelux	2,238	+4	521	+7	
Central Europe	3,232	+6	1,124	-2	
Southern Europe	4,445	-7	1,267	-6	
Eastern Europe	797	+30	483	+39	
Irish Republic	1,677	+15	581	+32	
Total Europe	13,859	+8	4,635	+5	
North America	3,550	+4	2,066	0	
Latin America	283	+31	190	+17	
Africa	602	+9	628	+13	
Middle East	602	-12	700	+2	
Australia/NZ/land	670	-15	465	+9	
Far East	1,399	-15	1,132	+14	
Total World	21,034	+8	9,919	+6	

Source: British Tourist Authority

UK tourism looks east after £10bn record year

JOJO MOYES

Britain is playing host to record numbers of tourists, who are spending increasing amounts. But unless it can tap into the new tourism markets, its share of international receipts will continue to slide – last year it fell 2 per cent, equivalent to a loss of £4bn.

According to the British Tourist Authority (BTA), a 39 per cent rise in Eastern European tourists and a 14 per cent rise in the amount spent by Asian visitors helped increase tourist revenue to a record £10bn last year.

Most of this was spent on hotels (36.1 per cent) and shopping (24.5 per cent) with a further £2m spent on eating out.

At the launch of its annual report yesterday it said Britain's tourist industry now employs 1.5 million people and is a large and

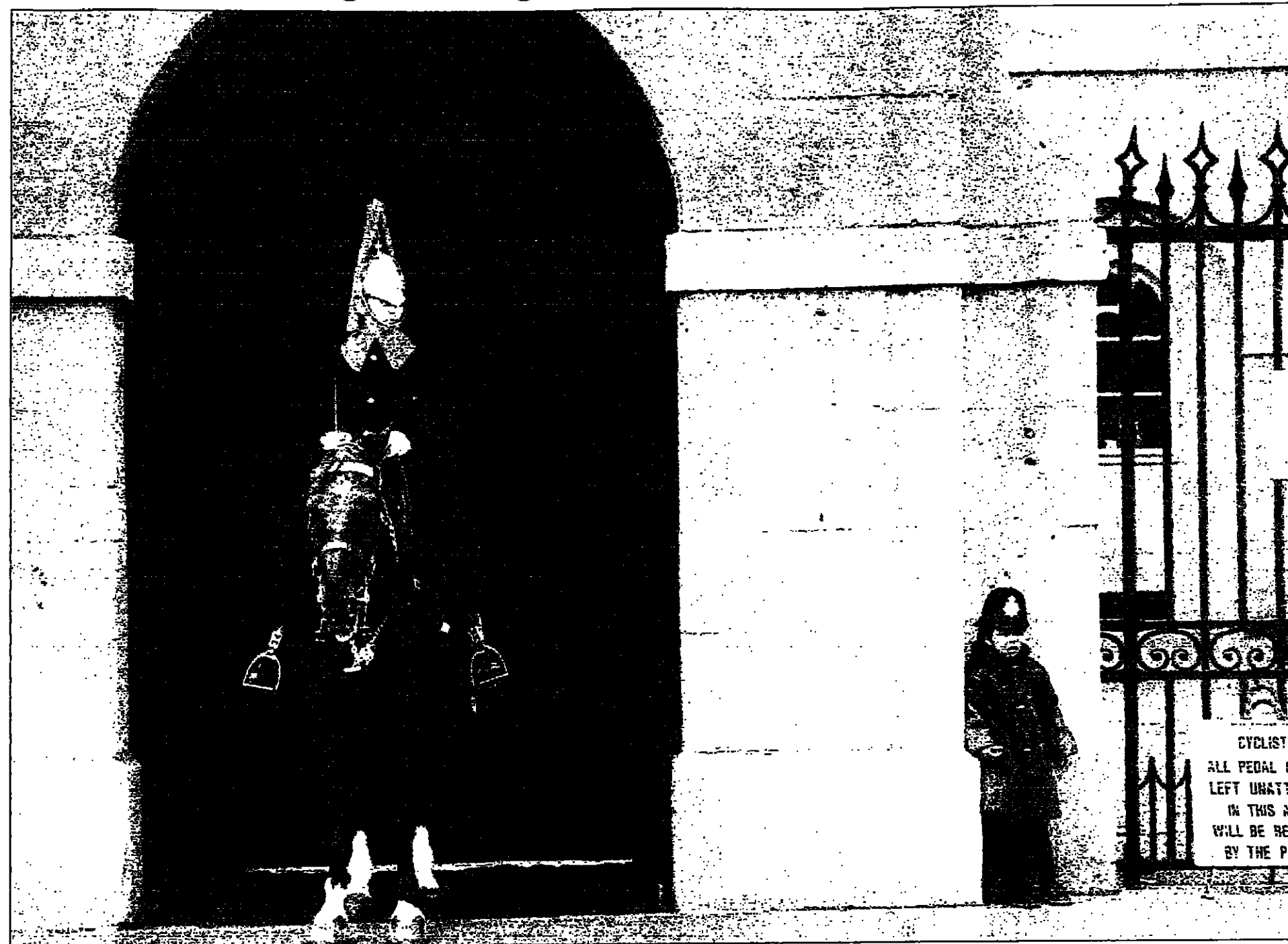
growing proportion of GDP, amounting to 5 per cent of export earnings.

According to Adele Biss, chairman of the BTA, it is also "the right kind" of export as it does not absorb a high proportion of imported raw materials and is spread geographically and economically throughout the country.

But she warned yesterday that if Britain were to halt its gradual slide in worldwide share of tourism receipts, it needed to lure new visitors from a mushrooming selection of alternative destinations and capitalise on its reputations for both tradition and youth culture.

"Tourism is expected to be the world's largest industry by the year 2000, but sustaining Britain's share of this huge growth industry will not be easy," said Ms Biss.

"In the immediate future,



London pride: The Horse Guards in Whitehall are part of a tourist trail that helped bring £10bn to Britain last year

Photograph: Dillon Bryden

the BTA ought to establish a stronger presence in new markets such as Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Malaysia where international travel is growing at three times the world average."

According to Anthony Sell, the BTA's chief executive, the lowering of Britain's world share has occurred primarily because the British economy has not been growing as fast as those

of the rest of the world. To address this and capitalise on the burgeoning Asian market, he said the BTA had undertaken a number of surveys to examine how other nationalities viewed Britain, and how they chose their holiday destination.

According to one, the Japanese saw the average British couple as 50-year-old beef-eating "squares" who were ob-

essed with politics and sticklers for punctuality. British lifestyles were considered "simple", "plain" and "solid" and described by the colours grey and brown. But they were impressed with the scenery.

"Some Japanese visitors said they wanted to go to sleep for an afternoon in Hyde Park. They considered they had ruined their own country," Mr Sell

said. "Others said they wanted to go walking around the London suburbs and look at people's gardens – because that was something they didn't have at home."

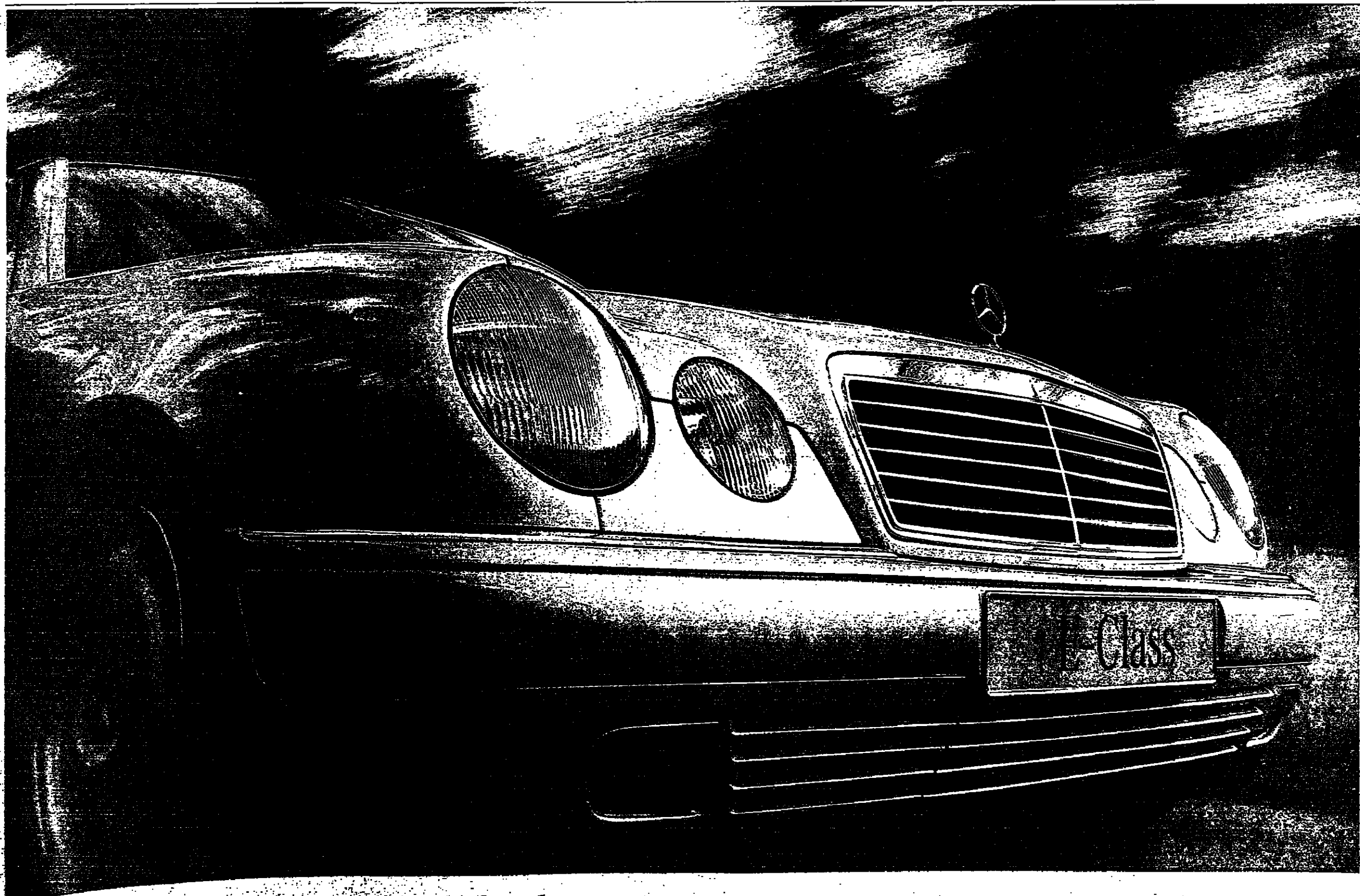
Peter Rabbit was also a popular draw, with many Japanese citing the Beatrix Potter books as their introduction to the English language and subsequently choosing Cumbria as a

holiday destination. But cultivating London's image as a city for hip young people has also been a success. As London emerges once more on to the cutting edge of fashion and popular music, the tourist authority finds that the Asian youth market is increasingly interested in Britain – and increasingly lucrative.

"By the year 2000, the aver-

age age in Asia is going to be 23. That's a fast-growing market. So in Hong Kong we conducted a campaign with Virgin with the Cantonese star Faye Wong dressed up as a Beefeater," said Mr Sell.

"The campaign ran for three months this summer and cost us £60,000. The 2,900 extra visitors this brought us generated an extra £24m."



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Voucher pilot plan will not guarantee a nursery place

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

The Government put a brave face yesterday on the underpowered launch of its pilot scheme for nursery-school vouchers, as Labour seized on its admission that parents with vouchers would not be guaranteed a school place.

Robin Squire, the education minister, admitted to "sadness" that only three local councils were committed to the scheme. But he said: "My disappointment is nothing compared to the parents of four-year-olds who next year will not have nursery provision but who could have... if their local authority had decided to participate."

He blamed "party political influence" for the refusal of Labour councils to take part in the pilot first year of the scheme. After this year's local elections, only a handful of education authorities are Conservative-controlled and three of them, Westminster, Wandsworth, and Kensington and Chelsea, all in London, have agreed to take part. Labour and Liberal Democrat-controlled Norfolk County Council has also agreed "in

principle", but is arguing about whether it is allowed to borrow against future voucher income.

The four boroughs are estimated to contain 3 per cent of the 150,000 four-year-olds presently not at nursery school - fewer than one-third of the Government's original target of 10 per cent for its pilot.

Vouchers worth £1,100 each will be delivered to the parents of an estimated 15,600 four-year-olds within three months, Mr Squire announced yesterday. About 4,500 of them will go to children who do not presently have a nursery place.

Estelle Morris, Labour education spokeswoman, drew attention to the small print of a briefing note issued by the Department for Education which says there is "no cast-iron guarantee of a place, at least in the first instance, until new places are introduced in response to parent demand".

She contrasted this with the Prime Minister's speech to the Conservative conference 1994, when he gave a "cast-iron commitment" - although he did not say when. Ms Morris said the scheme was "unravelling at the seams".

But Mr Squire confirmed

that the scheme will be extended to all four-year-olds in 1997, with parents expected to receive their vouchers before the last date for the general election in May that year.

When fully in operation, the scheme would cost more than £700m to run - £165m in new money and the rest clawed back from local authorities. The administration of the full scheme is expected to cost £20m. Officials said the cost of the first phase in the four local authorities would be £22m - £5m of which would be spent on inspection and administration.

Ms Morris said £5m "could provide 8,000 extra part-time nursery places for three year-olds". She added: "There is no new money for capital spending or teacher training."

Mr Squire also announced that Capita Managed Services had won the contract to administer the first phase of the scheme. But he refused to give the value of the contract, claiming the information was commercially sensitive.

And there was no figure available either for the cost of a publicity campaign which will operate in the four areas where the scheme is to go ahead.



Water under the bridge: Philip Agee, back in Britain after being banned for 17 years, at the Commons yesterday

Photograph: Jane Baker

Ex-CIA man urges surveillance of racists

The former CIA officer, Philip Agee, yesterday called on a future Labour home secretary to use the security and intelligence services to combat racism and neo-fascist groups in Britain, writes Colin Brown.

Mr Agee, who was expelled from Britain by the then Labour government in 1977 after pressure from the US Nixon government, said MI6 and MI5

should "go for skinheads, football hooligans as well as the traditional targets of narcotics and terrorism".

Mr Agee became a hero of the left in the 1970s after publishing details of CIA subversion operations. He was allowed to work on his book under the Heath government, but alleges Merlyn Rees, then home secretary, and James Callaghan,

the prime minister, acted after pressure by Henry Kissinger, the US Secretary of State.

Mr Agee was told "out of the blue" in August that the banning order preventing him from visiting Britain had been lifted after 17 years by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary.

Tom Dalyell, the veteran Labour campaigner, said he would be asking the Home Sec-

retary why he had decided to lift the ban. "Could it be partly he thinks this might stir up trouble in the Opposition party?" Mr Dalyell asked. The MP said he had invited Lord Rees to the meeting at the Commons with Mr Agee, hosted by *Tribune*, the paper of the Labour left which campaigned against his expulsion. "I can only say that the proverbial smoke came out of

his nostrils," Mr Dalyell said. Mr Agee was once described as the "most dangerous man in Britain", but the Home Secretary appears to have decided that after 17 years, his secrets no longer carry a threat. However, Mr Agee said that the banning order may have been lifted because Conservative governments are more independent from US influence.

Major at bay as Commons senses defeat over Nolan

John Major was forced on to the defensive at Question Time yesterday as Labour berated him for going back on his word and refusing to back full disclosure of MPs' earnings.

Though the Prime Minister argued that a ban on paid advocacy went beyond Lord Nolan's recommendations, it made little impact on a House that senses he is heading for defeat on the issue next Monday. After a succession of Question Times in which Mr Major has dominated the exchanges, the determination of his backbenchers to keep secret their earnings from consultancies has handed the initiative to Labour.

Opening the exchanges, Angela Eagle, MP for Wallasey, asked why, if disclosure of earnings was so unimportant, up to 100 Tory MPs were threatening

Inside Parliament
Stephen Goodwin

to resign if they were forced to share that information with their constituents. Advising Ms Eagle not to be-

lieve all the "nonsense" she read in the newspapers, Mr Major emphasised that he had set up the committee on standards in public life because he believed that there was a problem that needed to be looked at dispassionately.

The [Tory-controlled] select committee that considered Lord Nolan's report had actually gone further by calling for a ban on MPs acting as paid advocates, he said.

But Tony Blair asked why having set up the Nolan committee and having agreed to implement its report, Mr Major and other ministers were going to vote against its key recommendation - "the simple, hon-

est requirement that MPs who have outside financial interests connected with their being MPs should disclose the amount of money they earn from them. Just what do he and his party have to hide?"

Mr Major said he had made clear throughout that he supported the "broad thrust" of Lord Nolan's recommendations. Nolan had made 55 recommendations, 45 of the ten were to the Government, almost all of which had been implemented. Of the 10 addressed to MPs, the select committee had accepted nine and gone further than Nolan on the 10th.

The most important thing was the ban on paid advocacy,

the Prime Minister insisted. "But if we do that, the income that MPs earn from other activities, explicitly approved by Parliament, seems to me to be a matter between them and the Inland Revenue inspectors."

Roared on by his backbenchers, the Labour leader said: "This is nothing to do with some detailed consideration of their interests. It's to do with the squalid, moribund interests of the Conservative Party."

"That was their key recommendation and if now, in weakness, Mr Major goes back on his word to implement the report he commissioned, it will leave a stain on his prime ministership and his Government that will

not be removed until this rotten administration is swept from office."

Hitting back at what he called a "short-term, party political rant", Mr Major said it was a "shame" the Labour leader could not understand that disclosure was a very serious matter for Parliament with very long-term implications.

"I do not favour a wholly professional House staffed entirely by honourable members who are professional politicians and nothing else. That is the route that Mr Blair and his party would wish to lead us down. He would then, no doubt, have his party thought police telling them what to do and issuing

statements on their behalf as he did last week."

Rising to the despatch box for a third time, Mr Blair pointed out that Nolan was not stopping people having outside interests. "It simply says we should be open and honest about them. Mr Major is a man saying today what he knows to be wrong. And the question for him is: when is he going to have the courage to stand up to his party and tell them what is right?"

Tom King, the former defence secretary and a member of Nolan committee, came to Mr Major's aid, lauding the advocacy ban as going to the heart of the issue of public concern.

But the backbenchers who want to keep their earnings secret remained silent. Other Tory questioners steered well clear, with congratulatory dollops on the lottery and GP fund-holders and a blast at the judiciary over the Rev Sun Myung Moon.

Labour allowed no let up. "No one would accuse the Prime Minister of being a professional politician," taunted Tony Banks, while Gerry Sutcliffe left Mr Major floundering on the basic issue. Wasn't it true, asked the Bradford South MP, "that if MPs act as consultants the public have a right to know whether they earn £50 or £50,000?"

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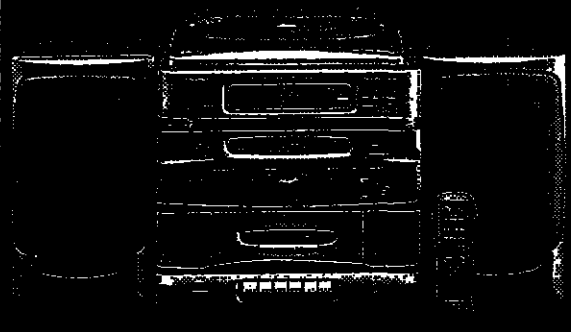
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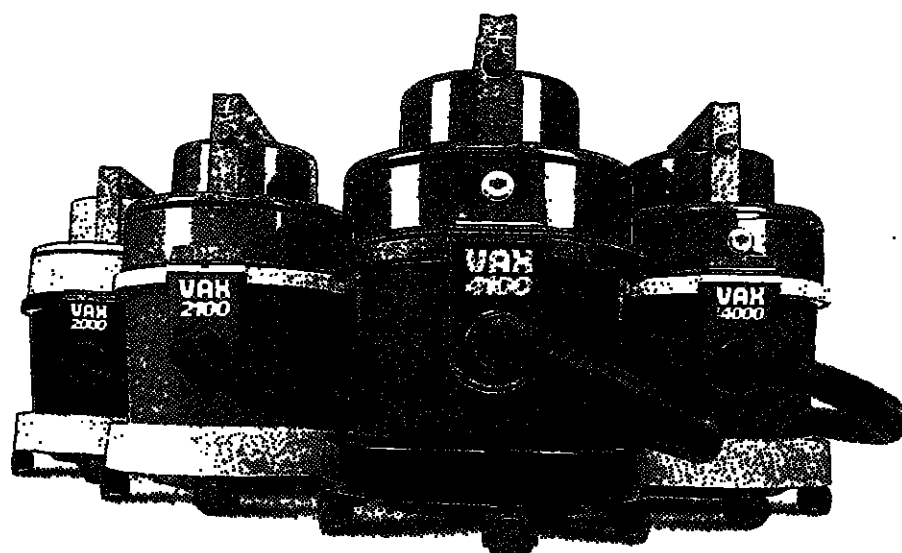
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French police arrest key Paris terrorists

MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

The French Interior Ministry yesterday claimed a major breakthrough after police arrested an Algerian, said to have helped to "command and co-ordinate" recent bomb attacks in France, and three others allegedly preparing to plant a bomb in the northern city of Lille.

The men were among 10 people detained in a three-pronged operation carried out in districts of Paris, Lille and Lyons between Wednesday evening and Thursday morning. The arrests appear to link all the bomb attacks in the Paris and Lyons areas since July, and mark the first significant development in the case since a prime suspect, Khaled Kelkal, was shot dead by police near Lyons in September.

The anti-terrorist department, internal security forces and the intelligence services were all involved in yesterday's operation.

The Interior Minister, Jean-Louis Debré, congratulated the police on "pre-empting an imminent criminal act which would have been especially murderous, because it was intended for one of Lille's biggest and most crowded markets."

According to Mr Debré, all the components needed to make a large bomb had been found at the home of Omar Allaoui, at Villeneuve-d'Ascq, near Lille. They included "a 13kg gas cylinder, explosives, nails, bolts, a fuse and a timing device, which were in every respect identical to those discovered at the scene of some earlier attacks."

Naming the Algerian arrested in Paris as Boualem Bensaid, Mr Debré said the 28-year-old had played "an active role in the command and co-ordination" of the networks responsible for the terrorist attacks attributed to the GIA (the Armed Islamic Group). The GIA, believed to be a loose alliance of fundamentalist groups which accuses France of trying to shore up

the military-backed regime in Algeria, made known its involvement last month through an Islamic newsletter.

Mr Debré claimed Mr Bensaid was on the point of giving the order for the Lille attack, adding: "He appears to be one of the pivots of this criminal enterprise... and had connections with the Lyons group gathered around Kelkal and Koussa." Karim Koussa, who is recovering in hospital from injuries sustained in a shoot-out with police six weeks ago, has recently been extensively questioned by investigators.

Among the others named were 25-year-old Naseridine Slimani, who was one of two people picked up in Vieux-en-Velin, near Lyons, the town where Kelkal lived, and Ali Ben Fatoum, who was detained in Lille and subsequently described by interior ministry sources as "a big catch".

Yesterday's arrests came in the nick of time for the French police and the Interior Ministry, which have faced mounting

criticism over their failure to halt the bomb attacks despite the two-month-old national security alert, named *Vigilance*. Recent media comment has called into question both the cost and the usefulness of the exercise, which has put troops on the streets and alienated sections of the young immigrant population with frequent identity checks.

Yesterday, after several uncommunicative weeks, the Interior Ministry was only too happy to speak about what it felt was a finely targeted and highly successful operation. As if answering his critics, Mr Debré pointedly singled out "the minute attention to detail, patience, professionalism and great secrecy" which, he said, had been "the prerequisites for this success".

However, learning from his gaffe after Kelkal's death, when he had predicted the end of the attacks, he called for prudence and continued vigilance. "The threat remains," he said, "*Vigilance* will continue."

Bosnia peace talks: Call for Mladic to answer to war crimes tribunal Serb atrocities under spotlight

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Bosnian Serb atrocities moved quickly to the centre stage of the Bosnia peace talks yesterday, as both the Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, and Bosnia's President, Alija Izetbegovic, in effect demanded the departure of the two main Bosnian Serb leaders, both indicted for war crimes by an international tribunal.

As he left the Wright-Patterson Air Force base at Dayton, Ohio, where a news blackout has been in effect since the plenary opening session on Wednesday, Mr Christopher said NATO was unlikely to agree to police any settlement which left in place the Bosnian Serb political leader, Radovan Karadzic, and the top military commander, General

Ratko Mladic. The two men are considered to hold prime responsibility for "ethnic cleansing" and massacres of Bosnian Muslim civilians, most notably after the fall of the Srebrenica "safe area" last summer and now around Banja Luka and Sanski Most.

Mr Izetbegovic was said on Wednesday to have told the Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic, who speaks for the Bosnian Serb leadership at the peace conference, that Mr Karadzic and General Mladic must be handed over to the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

These first indications give a clue to how difficult will be the negotiations ahead, as the leaders of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia, along with representatives of the five-nation Contact Group, attempt to strike a deal

to end the bloodiest and most destructive war in Europe since 1945. Despite a "good start" to the discussions, "vast differences" remained, Mr Christopher said.

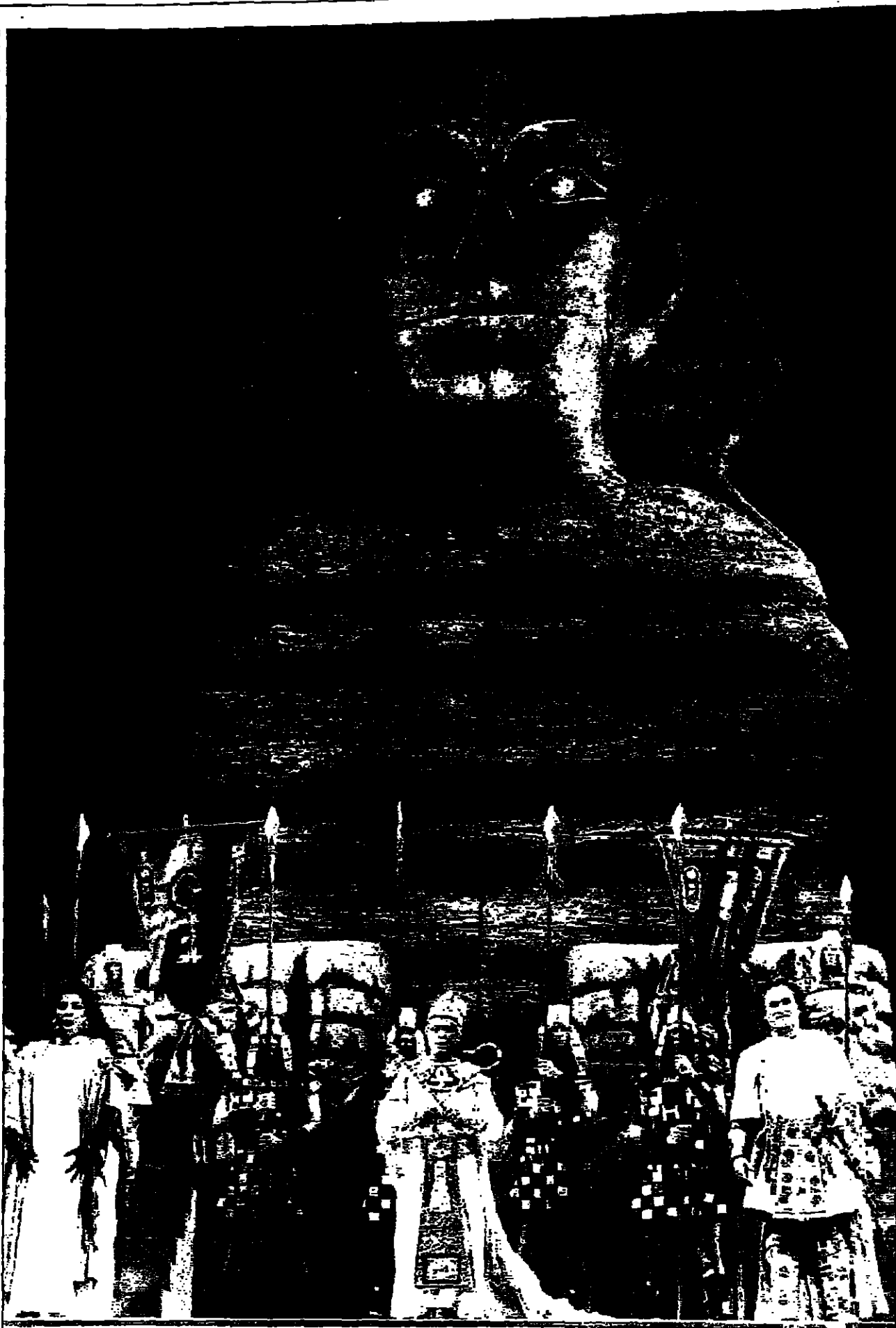
Among the thorniest issues to be resolved are the future constitution of Bosnia, enshrining "two entities" in a single state, the status of Sarajevo, arrangements for elections that the US wants held within six to nine months of the war's end, and a map detailing the envisaged 51-49 split of the country between the Muslim-Croat federation and the Bosnian Serbs.

All are dealt with in a draft settlement presented by the Contact Group. But, said Richard Holbrooke, the chief US negotiator, just before the talks began, "I don't expect a single page to last 48 hours."

The only encouragement was

a symbolic agreement between President Milosevic and his Croat opposite number, Franjo Tudjman, to resolve the dispute over Eastern Slavonia, the one sliver of Croatian territory still in the hands of rebel Serbs. But the extent of the understanding was unclear, and President Tudjman was due to leave for Zagreb last night.

The Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole, said the fate of an American journalist missing in Bosnia should be raised at the talks in Dayton. David Rohde, a correspondent with the *Christian Science Monitor*, went missing on Sunday in Bosnian Serb territory. Clayton Jones, the newspaper's international news editor, said yesterday that the *Monitor* had been told by the United Nations that Mr Rohde was alive and being held by the Bosnian Serbs.



Fascinating Aida: Singers rehearsing Verdi's opera, which opened in Berlin last night. Photograph: Lutz Schmidt/Reuters

Rifkind soothes Russian fears over expanded Nato



Rifkind: Understanding

MICHAEL SHERIDAN
Diplomatic Editor

The Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, has made a notably conciliatory reference to Russia in a major foreign policy speech, saying that Russian concern over the enlargement of Nato must be assuaged and that expansion itself must be more fully considered.

Mr Rifkind said the alliance should display understanding for Russian preoccupations, and should build up a broader relationship with Moscow. "We must show understanding

for Russian concerns, for the rights of 25 million Russians abroad, for instance, for the perception, mistaken though it may be, of exclusion and encirclement," the Foreign Secretary said, in a speech prepared for delivery last night.

His remarks will be interpreted as a cautious reaction to the illness of President Boris Yeltsin and a reflection of worries in the West that Russian extremists could come to the fore in parliamentary elections next month. The rights of ethnic Russians in former Soviet republics and the spectre of encirclement

are themes evoked by virulent nationalists and unconstructed Communists opposed to Mr Yeltsin and to his Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozlov.

Mr Rifkind emphasised that Nato was committed to extending its membership to the new democracies of Eastern Europe. "But the impact of expansion must be more fully considered," he said. There would be enormous financial and strategic implications, he added, and new members had to be aware of the military obligations inherent in a common defence guarantee.

"None of this invalidates the case for accepting into Nato countries those who seek the reassurance it provides and who are ready to accept the obligations involved," Mr Rifkind said. "It does indicate that a wider strategy is needed."

The Foreign Secretary also argued for strengthening security ties with the United States. He said Britain had to look both to the US and to Europe for the preservation of its vital interests.

"It is often assumed that there is a conflict between our European and Atlantic interests, that Britain must choose where

its destiny lies," Mr Rifkind said. "It is an assumption that I completely reject."

Mr Rifkind said defence co-operation could not be put under the auspices of the European Union, but should stay within the boundaries of Nato and the Western European Union. He detected no contradiction between enthusiasm for Nato and a commitment to Europe. "In advocating a strengthened transatlantic identity, I must emphasise that this will not be at the expense of our participation in the European Union," he said.

IN BRIEF

US troops could be hanged over

Seoul — The United States agreed to study whether American troops accused of serious crimes in South Korea should be handed over to Korean authorities for questioning before they are indicted, after a rape case in Japan. The US Defence Secretary, William Perry, opened two days of annual security talks with South Korean leaders also warning North Korea that thousands of US troops remained ready to help defend the South in any new war. But the issue of legal jurisdiction over those troops took the spotlight after the alleged rape of a 12-year-old girl by three US servicemen on Okinawa in September. He stressed that the rights of US personnel would be paramount in consideration of any softening of very strict protection of US troops overseas. *Reuters*

Former Colombian president killed

Bogota — Akaro Gomez Hurtado, 76, a former Colombian presidential candidate, ambassador to Washington and outspoken critic of the government, was killed in an attack by unidentified gunmen. Radio news bulletins said two assailants shot Mr Gomez near the entrance of Sergio Arboleda University. *Agencies*

More massacres in Burundi

Bujumbura — Aid workers in Burundi said they counted 103 fresh graves at a massacre site and the nation's capital was rocked overnight by heavy gunfire and grenade blasts. Security sources said at least four people died in the overnight flare-up. State radio reported at least 42 killed in a refugee camp in the northern province of Kayanza on Wednesday. *Reuters*

Andreotti stands up for himself

Perugia — Former Italian prime minister Giulio Andreotti defended himself before a judge who was deciding whether to indict him for complicity in the murder of a journalist in 1979. He is accused of complicity in the shooting of Mino Pecorelli, outside the Rome offices of *Opus* magazine, that was about to publish an article on Christian Democrats financing. *Reuters*

Abortion doctors face prison terms

Washington — The House of Representatives voted to impose a two-year prison term for doctors who perform certain late-term abortions — the first time Congress has moved to outlaw a specific abortion procedure. By a 288-139 vote the House passed a bill banning so-called partial birth abortions, a rare procedure in which a foetus is partly delivered feet-first, scissors inserted in the base of the skull and the brains suctioned out while the head is still in the birth canal. *Reuters*

Nineteen hanged in South Korea

Seoul — Nineteen convicted felons on Death Row were hanged, the Justice Ministry said. The executions — in Seoul, Pusan, Taegu and Kwangju — were the first since 15 prisoners were put to death 13 months ago. It was the largest-scale execution held by the ministry. Forty-three inmates remain on death row. *AP*

Russian cosmonauts find leak

Moscow — Three cosmonauts on board Russia's orbiting Mir station have discovered a leak in the main cooling system and have switched to a back-up system, space officials said on Thursday. In theory the consequences of the leak could lead to an increase of temperature inside the station, though the reserve system was working normally. *Reuters*

Gunmen kill migrant workers

Karachi — Gunmen killed 15 migrant workers here on Thursday in a mass killing that police said could be revenge for the deaths of three militants of the ethnic Mohajir National Movement (MQM). Police said 16 workers, all apparently from the central province of Punjab, were rounded up overnight in the Gulberg area in District. *Reuters*

Clowns burn their costumes

Tegucigalpa, Honduras — More than 60 clowns burned their costumes in a park to protest the kidnapping of children by armed men dressed as clowns. Armed men in clown suits stole 10 children from the arms of their mothers in the past week here and in San Pedro Sula, police say. Police say an average of one child a day has been abducted in the last month. *AP*

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Yeltsin's health better, political future critical

RICHARD BALMFORTH
Reuters

Moscow — The Kremlin said yesterday that President Boris Yeltsin was feeling better in hospital, while his political foes sharpened their knives as they began campaigning for Russia's parliamentary election on 17 December.

Mr Yeltsin, 64, was taken to hospital a week ago after suffering his second mild heart attack in four months. "He is better, of course," a presidential spokesman said by telephone. "Medical treatment bears fruit." The statement bore a marked contrast to a cautious assessment by the top presidential adviser Viktor Ilyushin on Wednesday, who said after a brief meeting with Mr Yeltsin: "I cannot say that he looks well." Yesterday, after visiting Mr Yeltsin again, Mr Ilyushin said: "Things are getting better because the President has started getting into things."

Mr Ilyushin, a loyal Yeltsin lieutenant, said on Wednesday that the President himself realised that his second mild heart attack in less than four months was "no joking matter". Yeltsin aides were reported yesterday to be working hard to ensure the Kremlin leader's re-election next June, though Mr Yeltsin has yet to say if he is a candidate. Their current efforts suggest his Kremlin associates believe the President's heart illness will not rule him out of the race, according to a group of political analysts.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace quoted a source close to the chief Yeltsin bodyguard, General Alexander Kozhakov, as saying

the administration was working "full steam ahead" on Mr Yeltsin's campaign for the June presidential poll.

Media and television cameras have been kept well away from Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital. With political tension high among myriad parties in the run-up to the December election, aides have been careful to say he is in command.

But Mr Ilyushin's Wednesday meeting with Mr Yeltsin was restricted to 10 minutes, strongly suggesting there was a limit to his grip on day-to-day events. Up to now most of Mr Yeltsin's many opponents have refrained from trying to exploit his illness for fear of such a play back-firing. But as political parties began the first formal day of campaigning yesterday, with the first snow of winter swirling in Moscow, Mr Yeltsin's powerful Communist foes took the gloves off.

The Communist Party leader, Gennady Zyuganov, took a swipe at the bed-ridden leader for his eccentric behaviour. Listing events on Mr Yeltsin's heavily-charged programme before he was taken ill, Mr Zyuganov referred to him "paying attention to a secretary" — an allusion to an incident when he "tweaked" a Kremlin secretary in the back at the start of a news conference. Mr Zyuganov suggested Mr Yeltsin's illness had highlighted the weakness of the presidential system in which the State Duma has been largely sidelined as a decision-making body.

"We must strictly follow the law, strengthen all bodies of power... because the country cannot be hostage to the state of health and behaviour of one person," he said.

The Communists were one of 35 parties officially registered on Wednesday night. The Central Electoral Commission has barred the main reform party, Yabloko, headed by the liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky, on technical grounds, but the party has appealed to the Supreme Court to reverse the decision.

With Mr Yeltsin's advisers having only limited access to him, Russian commentators are asking who is really running the country.

Speculation has focused on General Kozhakov, who appears to wield influence beyond his formal role, and could use access to Mr Yeltsin in hospital for political ends.



Damaged goods: Women queue to buy cheap slightly cracked eggs in the town of Luybertsy outside Moscow Photograph: Viktor Korotayev/Reuters

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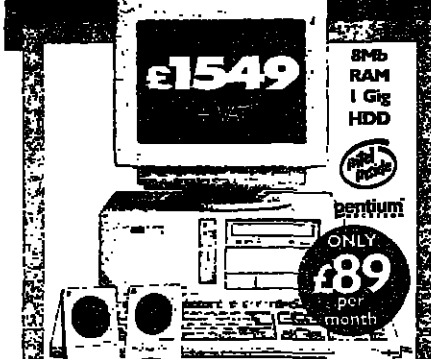
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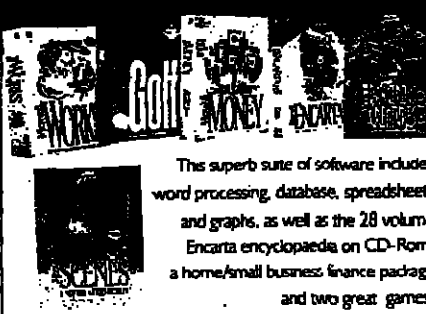
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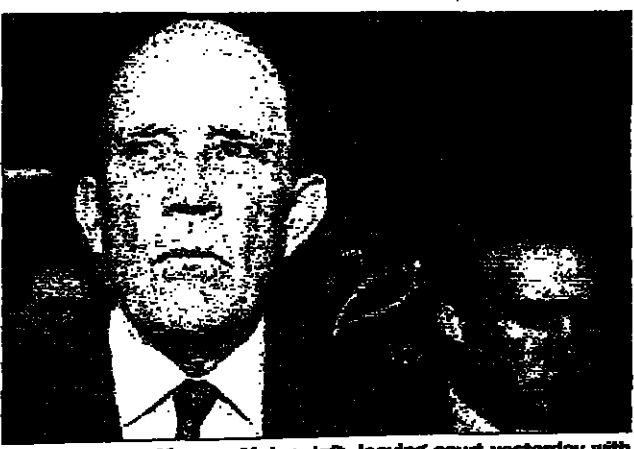
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Compaq 1186	£3600	£3600	£360	£360	£4680
Compaq 1286	£3900	£3900	£390	£390	£5070



Mandela's foe: Magnus Malan, left, leaving court yesterday with a security official Photograph: Mike Hutchings/Reuters

Proud defender of apartheid on trial for murder

ROBERT BLOCK
Johannesburg

Dressed in sober suits, 11 retired officers representing the cream of old South Africa's military establishment were yesterday arrested, brought before a judge and charged with 13 apartheid-era murders. They were granted bail and told to appear in Durban's regional court again on 1 December.

Never before had such a distinguished group of high-ranking military men had to face official charges for crimes committed during the years of white minority rule. Among the accused were five generals and an admiral, but only one of them could really lay claim to star status: General Magnus Malan, a former defence chief who served as defence minister during the last violent decade of apartheid, from 1980 to 1991. It is a fact of which he is still proud. General Malan said yesterday: "What happened here today is causing the biggest crisis that's ever been in the democracy of South Africa. I would like to say I am a moderate... I am a democrat... I am a Christian and I'm very proud of it."

The statement, like the general's history, is controversial. Throughout his ministerial tenure, General Malan was an outspoken foe of President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress.

As defence chief in the 1970s he came into close contact with P W Botha, then defence minister, a post he would later relinquish to General Malan when he became president. General Malan once said Mr Botha had a great influence on him and his views on politics and military strategy coincided. In both posts General Malan

articulated the "total onslaught" theory, which was used to justify the expansion and ruthless tactics adopted by the South African military in its war against the black liberation movement. According to this argument, the Communist world, working through the ANC and its allies, was bent on a "total onslaught" against South Africa and that in response the country had to adopt a "total national strategy" to combat it.

During his final days at the Defence Ministry, General Malan repeatedly fended off charges that for years undercover army units had stoked black faction-fighting and killed government opponents. In 1990 he admitted the existence of a shadowy anti-guerrilla unit, but denied ordering its members to kill.

When F W de Klerk and his fellow apartheid reformists took over from Mr Botha, General Malan was demoted. He resigned from Mr de Klerk's cabinet in 1993.

The case against General Malan and the others focuses on their alleged role in setting up a paramilitary force for Inkatha, the black rival organisation of the ANC. The charges relate to a hit squad attack on the home of Willie Ntuli at KwaMakhutha, near Durban, on 21 January 1987. Thirteen people, including seven children, were killed in the attack, which was apparently aimed at Ntuli's son, a local youth activist.

Central to the case is General Malan's connection with special training camps set up in the mid-1980s in Namibia's Caprivi Strip. The camps were ostensibly to train bodyguards for Zulu politicians. However, it is alleged that the Caprivi was really a training ground for Inkatha paramilitary cadres, specialising in assassination and sabotage.

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Jihad bombers killed in failed revenge attacks

ASYA ABDUL-HADI
Gaza
and PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

"He was wearing a black sweater and I could see a barrel in the back seat of the car", said 14-year-old Munir Abu Eid, describing the last moments of a Palestinian suicide bomber who died yesterday morning as he tried to ram an Israeli bus in the Gaza strip.

The barrel, which presumably contained explosives, tore apart the beige Fiat 124 but only smashed the glass windows of the bus, lightly wounding 11 Israelis, mostly of whom were child-care workers. "I heard the yelling of the settlers and the soldiers inside before the ambulance came", Munir said. Casualties were probably low because an Israeli military jeep hampered the Fiat's approach to the bus, according to an Israeli officer at the scene.

The attack at Deir al-Ballah, in the south of the Gaza strip, comes six days after Fathi Shkaki, leader of the militant group Islamic Jihad, was assassinated in Malta. In an interview published in the *Washington Post* yesterday, the Israeli Health Minister, Ephraim Sneh, all but admitted his government was responsible. Members of Islamic Jihad, responsible in the past for suicide bomb attacks on Israeli targets, have sworn to avenge their leader's death.

A second suicide bomber died soon afterwards, as he tried to blow up an Israeli military convoy. But soldiers who had been expecting an attack avoided any Israeli casualties by halting 50 yards from where the car blew up. The southern Gaza strip, where there is a concentration of 15 Israeli settlements, has been the scene of suicide attacks in the past.

Israeli and Palestinian leaders will be relieved that the

bombers failed to inflict serious casualties, but the attacks show Islamic Jihad is determined to prove it is still an effective force, despite Shkaki's death. Shimon Peres, the Israeli Foreign Minister, and Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, said they would press ahead with peace negotiations.

In the past, the most devastating suicide bombings have happened in Israel, when attackers strapped explosives to their bodies. Yesterday's attacks do not appear well planned, which may indicate that Islamic Jihad has been weakened by pressure from the Israeli and Palestinian Authority security forces.

Israeli forces have been on the alert since the assassination of Shkaki, and the bus which was attacked was escorted by Israeli military jeeps. "God loves me", said Moshe Danino, the driver, whose hair was scorched as the Fiat hit the front

of his bus, which was carrying workers to a settlement.

Mr Danino said his bus had just entered the Gaza Strip "when a car in front of us started to drive slowly. They [the soldiers] told its driver to move aside, but he paid them no attention. When we got within 200 metres of a roadblock, I turned left to pass him and that is when he drove at me and blew himself up."

The attack underlines the vulnerability of the 5,000 Israeli settlers who have remained in the Gaza strip despite Palestinian opposition. The women on the bus commute daily from poor agricultural towns in southern Israel to the Gush Katif block of settlements, where many work in kindergartens and nursery schools.

There will almost certainly be another attack. Jihad will want to show it is not a one-man band that will wither and die now Shkaki is no more.



Vain sacrifice: Israeli bomb experts carrying away chunks of the suicide bomber's vehicle

Photograph: Reuters

Dirty war: Fundamentalists held without trial are beaten, raped and denied medical help

Egyptian Islamists die in 'terror' jail

ROBERT FISK
Cairo

In a sinister new development in the Egyptian government's war against its Islamist opponents, at least 26 captured fundamentalists have mysteriously died in custody in just eight months, most of them in a grim new jail far out in the Sahara desert.

The deaths are described by Egyptian lawyers as a campaign of "terror" to eliminate Islamist suspects before they are even brought to trial. They follow consistent reports of the beating, starvation and rape of inmates in the Wadi al-Jadid prison complex 200 miles northwest of Assiut.

A lawyer who managed to visit the new jail two months ago has shown the *Independent* signed statements by four prisoners who describe how their fellow inmates, on arrival at the jail, were stripped and whipped with wire, ordered to assume female names and then either beaten or forced to perform homosexual acts with other prisoners as punishments for breaking jail rules.

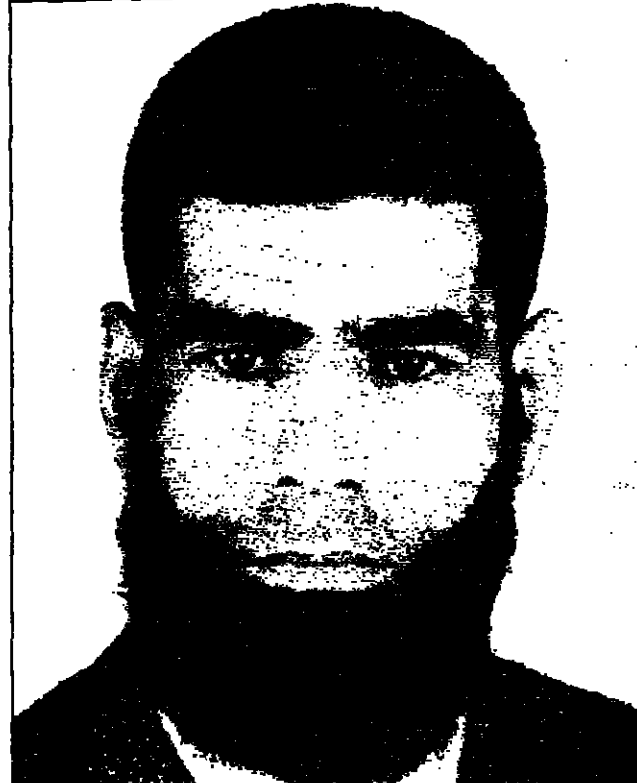
"Many of the prisoners are starved, and when they have been beaten, they have not received medical treatment - and so they die," the lawyer said after insisting that the *Independent* did not publish his name.

Twenty of the prisoners who have died were in their 20s and 30s. Most of their families have received certificates stating that they died of "sharp circulatory and respiratory failure".

In the case of Mustafa Iraqi, a 34-year-old Islamist lawyer, death in the Wadi al-Jadid prison was said to have been due to a "chest disease", but a fellow prisoner, Abdullah Ali Ahmed, testified that Iraqi had been tortured by security guards in the jail, and that wounds to his chest were deliberately left untreated. Police at the graveside at Iraqi's burial prevented any examination of the body.

When families have been allowed to see prisoners' bodies, they have almost invariably noticed that the dead man suffered severe weight loss. Other prisoners were said by the authorities to have died of "acute kidney failure" (Mohamed Ali Ahmed, 35), "acute pneumonia" (Ahmed Abd el-Maksoud, 28) or tuberculosis (Ayman Khalifa Haji, 27).

More typical was the case of 26-year-old Ali Mahmoud al-Raffie, who died in Wadi al-Jadid prison on 24 June, less than six months after his arrest. His family were summoned to receive his corpse at midnight and ordered by the police to bury it immediately. Security men stood by as Raffie's



Death in custody: Mustafa Iraqi's wounds went untreated

remains were lowered into his grave an hour later under police guard. He had died, they said, of "sharp circulatory and respiratory failure", although no death certificate was issued.

Hafez abu Sada, the executive chairman of the Egyptian Organisation of Human Rights, which has catalogued many of the deaths and complained in vain to the Egyptian Minister of the Interior, believes the deliberate mistreatment of the prisoners and their incarceration in the new jail, far from their homes, is part of a systematic punishment. "These men have not been tried - some of them have been held since 1989 - and we cannot even get a reply from the Interior Ministry when we demand an explanation for all these deaths," he said.

The lawyer who demanded anonymity was less diplomatic. "The government is using this prison to dehumanise and shame these men. That is why they are given female names - do you know how insulting that is for a Muslim? - and that is why, if a guard is angry with a prisoner, he will order another inmate to rape him, right there in the cell. This happens regularly."

The same lawyer described how new arrivals at Wadi al-Jadid, in which around 3,500 Islamists are now being held, were taken 10 at a time from covered lorries and ordered to crawl through the main gate. "They are then forced to crawl down a 45ft corridor, all the while being beaten by guards on

both sides. They are stripped and kicked by a man who gives each of them a woman's name. They must use this name all the time in the prison. They can wear only their underclothes for a week and then they are given a yellow prison uniform. There is no doctor, no prison hospital."

Reports of prisoners being forced to rape each other as punishment by guards have also emerged from the Wadi Natroun jail, near the desert road between Cairo and Alexandria. Here, too, inmates are forced to assume female names. "When he is first given the name, he must keep repeating it, shouting it out loud until he reaches the door of his cell," the lawyer said. "He and the other men then have to remain naked in the cell for two days."

Lawyers have been hampered in their efforts to visit clients in the jail by the refusal of prison officials to give their real names - for fear that their families could be murdered by members of the Islamic Jihad, whose savage war against President Hosni Mubarak's government has now cost the lives of at least 820 Egyptians.

Family members are also forced to wait for hours beneath the desert sun at both Wadi al-Jadid and Wadi Natroun to see their relatives, often being refused the statutory seven-minute visit because, according to lawyers, the official signatures on their visitors' passes are "illegible".

Dr Ossama el-Baz, Mr Mubarak's political affairs director, met Egyptian human rights groups for the first time in August to hear their complaints, and agreed to study their reports. Since then, there have been at least seven more deaths in custody.

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US election: As Colin Powell's possible candidacy stirs up mutinous feelings on the right, he continues to confuse his critics

Washington awaits the 'Rockefeller Republican'

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Even before Colin Powell has announced whether he will seek the 1996 Republican nomination, the very notion of his candidacy is reopening old fissures in the party, and generating a rebellion from many conservatives without precedent for two decades.

Pro-choice on abortion, a supporter of affirmative action and gun control, General Powell was never going to be a poster boy for the "social conservative" wing of the Republican right. But yesterday brought the most powerful coordinated protest yet, as luminaries of the ideological right summoned a press conference to denounce the most popular public figure in American life as a Clinton Democrat hiding behind a row of medal ribbons.

The individuals themselves, including Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council and the Paul Weyrich, head of the Free Congress Foundation, are scarcely household names in the country at large. Their very presence on the podium, though, offers a foretaste of the vitriol that General Powell can expect to face should he take the presidential plunge.

That is the riddle which consumes Washington, and one he has promised to answer perhaps as early as next weekend, in any

case by Thanksgiving - 23 November. In the meantime the contest for the nomination has been frozen, with Senator Bob Dole far ahead and his nine rivals, for all their efforts, next to nowhere.

The one small splash of late has been made by the businessman Malcolm "Steve" Forbes, whose saturation TV ad campaign promoting a flat tax has pushed him into second or third place in New Hampshire, where the crucial first primary takes place next February. But

Already he has exposed as a fallacy what had once been an axiom of Republican politics on abortion

the rest of the field, even the heavy-spending Senator Phil Gramm and the stridently right-wing Pat Buchanan, are simply treading water as the world waits for the Powell word.

Should he enter the race, polls suggest he would jump into a virtual dead heat with Senator Dole among likely Republican primary voters, but with a far better chance of defeating President Clinton in the presidential election. Moreover, General Powell as candidate would, most analysts say, drive at least half the field out of the contest completely.

Already he has exposed as a fallacy what had once been an axiom of Republican politics on abortion

party faithful. Only one in five Republicans would pay heed to calls from conservative Christian leaders to boycott candidates who do not oppose abortion.

Faced with these home truths, the Republican right has split. A faction led by yesterday's speakers and Mr Buchanan warns that a Republican convention would never swallow General Powell's liberal social views. Indeed Mr Buchanan hints that if the party's platform endorsed them he would walk out and perhaps mount an independent

candidacy - which could siphon off enough Republican votes to re-elect Mr Clinton.

Not perhaps since 1976, when conservatives forced President Gerald Ford to drop the liberal Nelson Rockefeller as his running-mate, have such mutinous feelings been stirred on the right. And a "Rockefeller Republican" is how General Powell has described himself.

Other conservatives speak warmly of him - among them the former Reagan and Bush Cabinet members Bill Bennett and Jack Kemp, and William Kristol, once chief of staff for Dan Quayle and architect of the former vice-president's "family values" campaign, but now ardently campaigning in the *Weekly Standard*, his new conservative magazine. Why, they argue, throw away a real chance of the White House for a likely loser in Bob Dole?

That calculation too has produced uncharacteristic caution from the most celebrated conservative of them all - Speaker Newt Gingrich. Mr Gingrich faces an awkward choice. A Powell victory would put into the White House a man less than wholly enamoured of the Speaker's "Republican Revolution". But if Mr Gingrich runs (which he has not ruled out) he would have to give up his present job, while every poll shows he would be trounced by Mr Clinton.



Presidential leanings: Colin Powell will announce his candidacy decision by 23 November. Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

Lawyers open fire on Italian army's fiddles

ANDREW GUMBEL
Rome

"The Italian fighting man is probably second to all," says the cynical 107-year-old man in Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*. Italy's armed forces have never been held in particularly high esteem, and now, thanks to the latest efforts of the country's indefatigable anti-corruption magistrates, one begins to understand why.

So busy are the troops inventing schemes to rip off the state, it seems, that they have no time to get into shape to fight.

Over the past week, magistrates across the country have uncovered thousands of cases of grossly inflated expenses claims, a system of bribery to relieve reluctant young men of their national service, and myriad kinds of corruption, forgery and embezzlement reaching right up the ladder to colonels and generals.

One has to admire the military for their ingenuity, at least. One group of officers in charge of procuring uniforms subcontracted the job to China at a tenth of the going rate in Italy and pocketed the difference.

Another individual officer claimed back the cost of moving more than four tons of equipment and personal effects for a routine trip to a military base for which he took no more than a toothbrush and a change of clothes.

So far, the magistrates have placed around 5,000 military personnel under investigation. And, thanks to the remarkable willingness of suspects to spill the beans on their friends in exchange for lenient treatment in the courts, there could be much more to come.

"New developments are

coming out daily. This is just the beginning," says the prosecutor Sergio Dini, initiator of the biggest single investigation, in Padua.

One favourite tactic has been to triple or quadruple the weight of personal effects of soldiers sent on foreign postings, and then share the profits with the moving company. The going rate for a bribe to avoid conscription, willingly accepted by some officers, is between 20m and 30m lire (£8,000-£12,000).

And then there are the individual cases, such as the admiral accused of abusing the full resources of the Venice arsenal to throw a wedding banquet for his daughter, or the curator of the military museum at the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome who allegedly pocketed 1bn lire by faking bills for exhibitions that never took place, projects that never got off the ground and non-existent loans to other museums.

The magistrates estimate that 18bn lire (about £6m) disappeared between 1988 and 1991 alone. The final figure is expected to run into tens of billions of lire. The revelations come as little surprise to the millions of Italian men who have served their mandatory 12-month stint in military service, but they are doing untold damage to the already shaky reputation of the armed forces.

The top brass was already highly embarrassed a few years ago, when it emerged that it had established a secret army called Gladio at the height of the Cold War to overthrow the Communists if they ever took power in Italy. Now it appears that the chief activity of Gladio officers was to meet in luxury hotels in holiday resorts at the expense of the taxpayer.

Police shoot bus hijacker dead

Miami Beach, Florida (AP) - A hijacker angry with tax collectors commandeered a school bus yesterday with 11 disabled children and two adults on board, taking them on a harrowing ride before police shot him dead.

About an hour after the hijacking began, police tried to negotiate with the hijacker. When that failed, they fired at least three shots at him, according to a police spokesman.

The authorities were uncertain whether the suspect was shot on the bus or as he was getting off it in front of a restaurant in Miami Beach.

Television showed police swarming around the front door of the bus and then dragging the suspect away.

Two restaurant workers said the hijacker had worked as a waiter at the restaurant, but left on Wednesday night apparently because of the tax dispute.

The hijacker told police he had a bomb and threatened to blow up the bus. Police said they found afterwards that the

device strapped to the man's body was not a bomb.

The Dade County schools superintendent, Octavio Visiedo, said 11 pupils were on the bus, with the bus driver and an aide. The school bus was on the way to Blue Lakes Elementary School in Miami when it was commandeered in south-west Dade County.

Police then surrounded the hijacked bus as it travelled from south-west Miami towards the town centre. News helicopters followed and the chase was broadcast live on national television.

During the hijacking, the bus driver kept in radio contact with authorities and passed on the hijacker's demands.

"The bus driver frankly was a hero," Mr Visiedo said. "She never panicked."

The bus finally stopped outside the restaurant, where the hijacker said he wanted to eat lunch. While police tried to negotiate, the bus started moving again slowly and stopped. The suspect was then shot.

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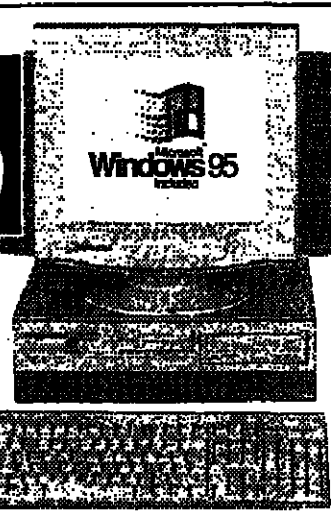
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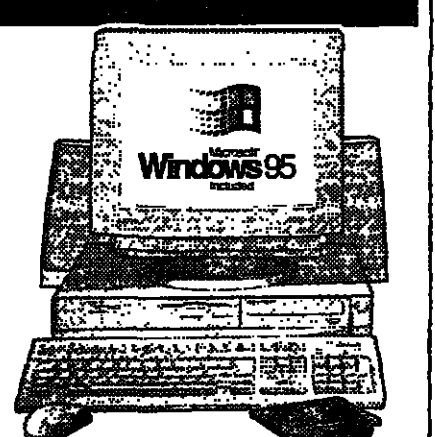
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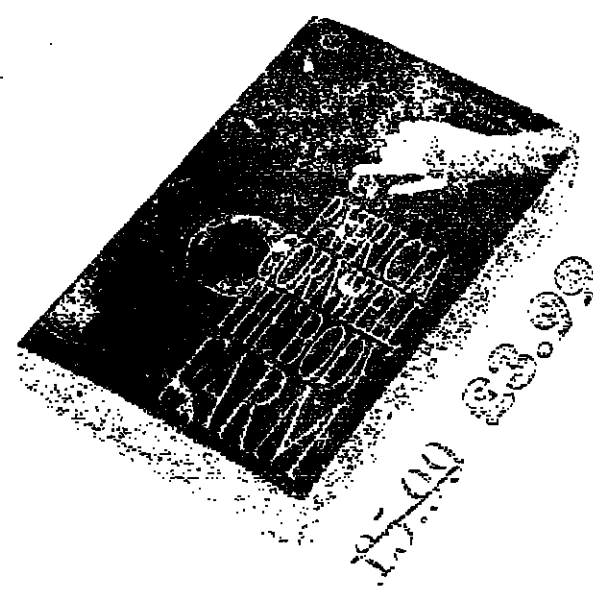
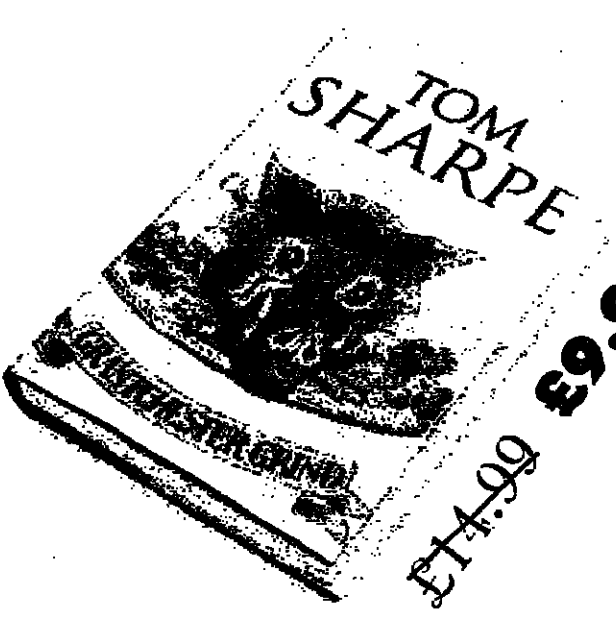
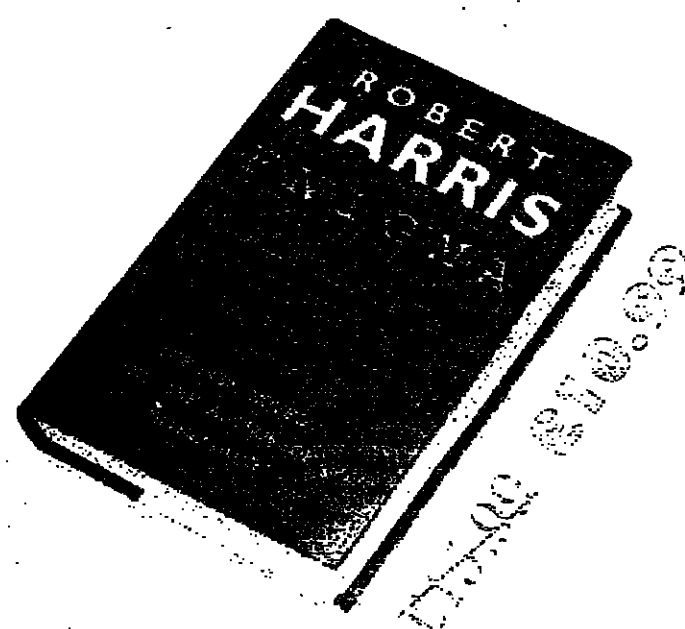
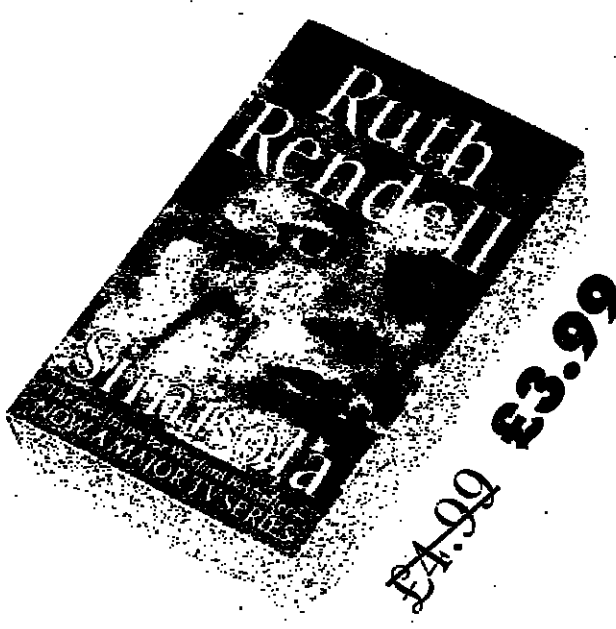
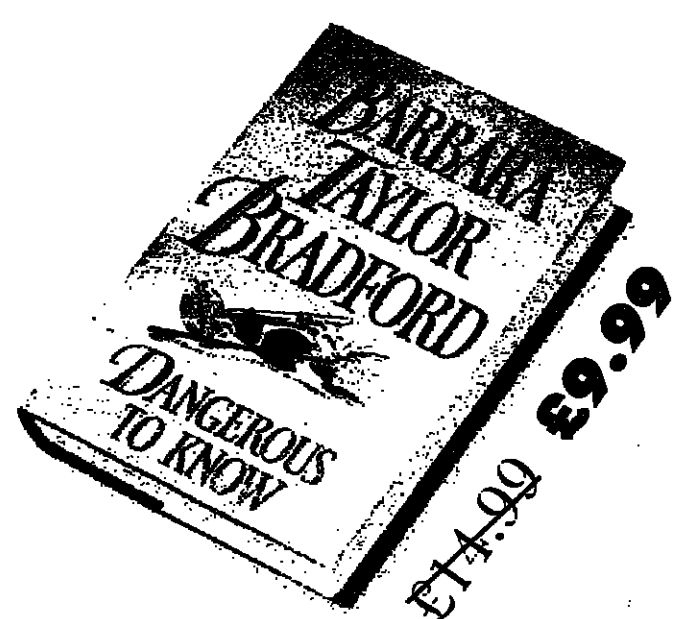
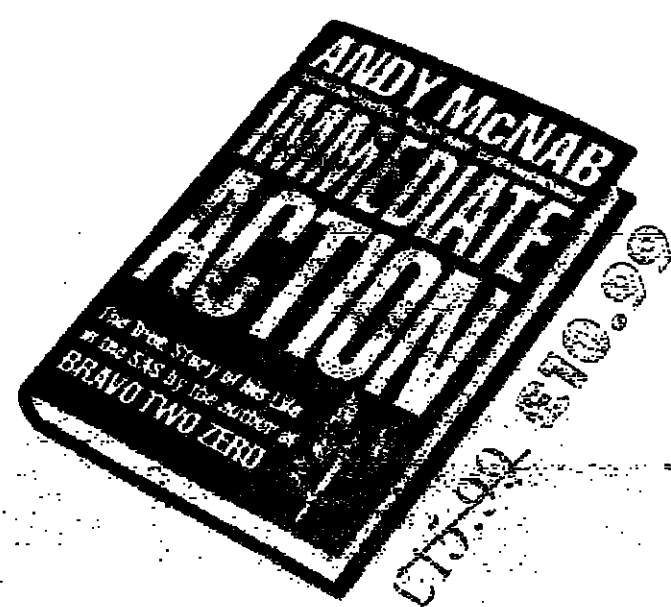
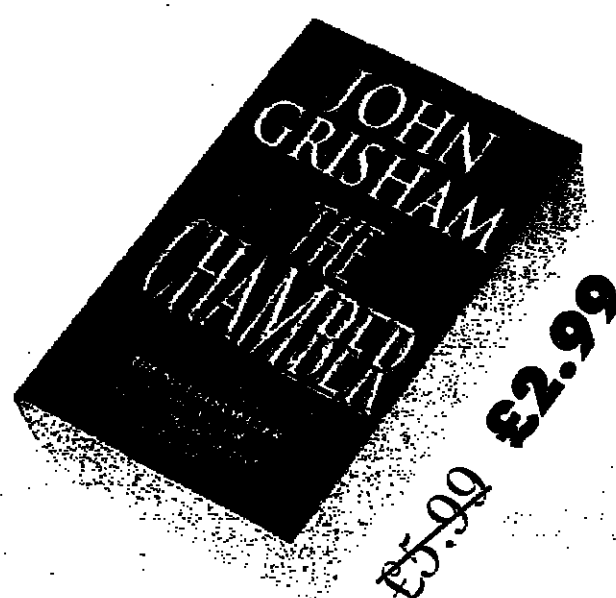
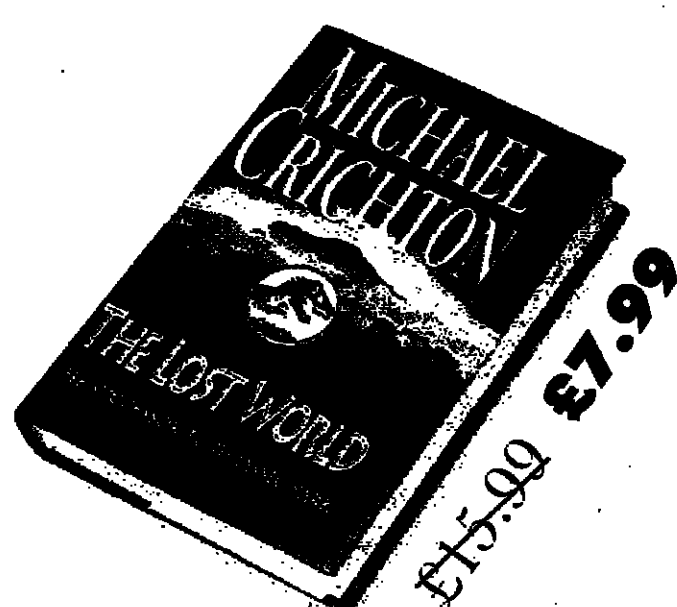
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international

Back from the brink: Cardoso is guiding his country on its first steps away from a past dominated by violence and corruption

Brazil shapes up under 'intellectual' president

PHIL DAVISON
Rio de Janeiro

When the Brazilian President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, met his US counterpart at the UN birthday celebrations in New York last week, he handed over an unusual gift, the memoirs of Cordell Hull, Secretary of State to one of Bill Clinton's White House predecessors, Franklin D Roosevelt.

Would Mr Clinton not have been more interested in a souvenir from Brazil? Perhaps. But Mr Cardoso was giving the American President a message. During the creation of the UN, Messrs Roosevelt and Hull had promised Brazil a permanent seat on the Security Council, a promise never kept but often cited by the 65-year-old former sociologist who now rules Brazil. Mr Cardoso was telling

Mr Clinton that Brazil's time had come. UN officials now say Brazil is a serious contender to become the first Latin American permanent member of an expanded Security Council.

This is due in no small part to Mr Cardoso's success in stabilising his nation since he took office on 1 January. He has tamed rampant inflation, shaken up a notoriously corrupt Congress, ended state monopolies in oil and communications, fostered increased trade with the European Union and generally improved the image of a nation whose last elected president, Fernando Collor de Mello, resigned as he was being impeached for corruption.

Now, Mr Cardoso is pushing through constitutional reforms of the tax system, social security and public workers' contracts, all of which he hopes will be in

place by next year. With his popularity still as high as when he was elected, few doubt that he will eventually try to push through another constitutional reform: to allow him to run again in 1998.

"He's a superb Brazilian president in relation to his immediate predecessors," said Richard Foster, a political analyst who runs the newsletter *BrazilWatch* in Brasilia. "He's not a macho president. He's an intellectual with specific goals. He's lived in the US and France. He speaks foreign languages and has a quick understanding of how First World leaders think." Dr Paulo Cahnua, professor of political science at Brasilia University, said: "He's probably the most popular leader in Latin America. But... he relies too much on his charisma. That's his Achilles heel."

Mr Cardoso was a leading sociologist when he was appointed economy minister in late 1993. By July 1994, he had launched his "Real Plan", casting off the old cruzeiro and replacing it with a new currency, the real, pegged loosely to the dollar. Previously, retail prices were rising by 50 per cent a month. When I visited Brazil shortly before the plan's introduction, my hotel cashier could not fit the zeros on to a single credit-card bill. Now, inflation is around 2 per cent a month, the real is worth slightly more than a dollar and Brazil's poor, the vast majority, strongly support the Real Plan.

Not everyone does. Farmers are demanding easier credit terms, and Mr Cardoso faces regular protests from landless peasants, demanding that he speed up land reforms.

Most analysts agree that economic stability is a prerequisite for social improvement. Violence in the cities, particularly in Rio, remains a serious problem. There are 21 homicides in the city daily. US anti-narcotics agents say that Brazil is becoming a processing and transit point for cocaine, and in addition to the kidnapping of poor girls for prostitution, there has been a new spate of kidnappings of the sons or daughters of wealthy businessmen.

Still, Mr Cardoso is focusing his efforts on a reform which would slash the salaries of 7 million public employees. Until now, being employed by government in Brazil was one of the world's most secure jobs. At senior level, civil servants earned several times as much as the President. They could not be sacked, even if they turned up to work only to collect their pay.

In a key vote last week, a congressional committee approved most of the constitutional amendment which would allow public employees to be sacked. It still has a long way to go, but it is seen as a symbol of the president's economic revolution.

"Cardoso knows it'll take 10, 15, 20 years to get Brazil into reasonable shape," said Mr Foster, "but he wants to be able to say, 'We started it in 1995.'"

Regeneration: The beach at Rio, where Brazilians can celebrate a better life

Photograph: Editorial Atlantida

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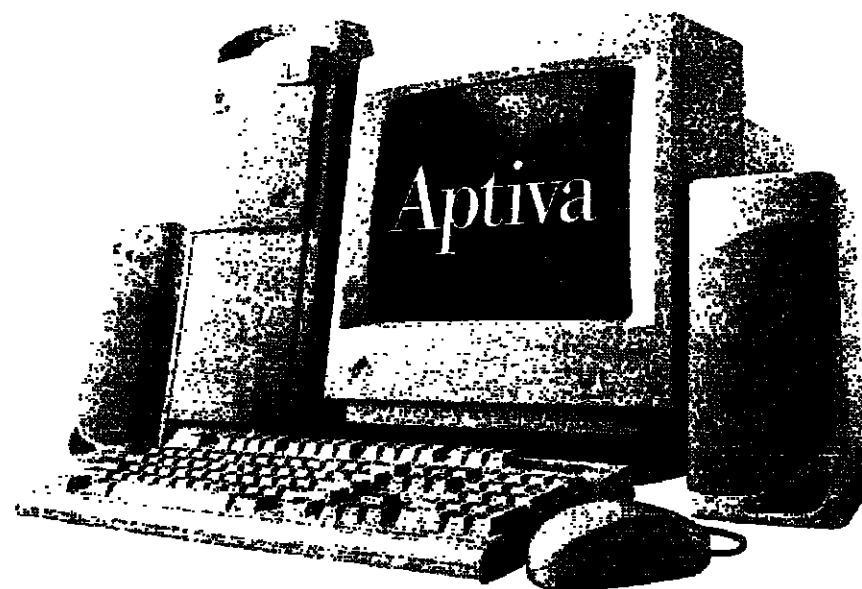
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PEKING DAYS

Veggie shadow boxers hold the secret of long life

Autumn in Peking, the leaves are falling from the trees, and a young woman's thoughts cannot help but dwell on her own mortality. But help has been close at hand. China's capital has been host to an international conference on the theme: "How to live to the age of 100".

According to the programme, all was to be revealed at the Fragrant Hills hotel on the outskirts of Peking. A group of Chinese 100-year-olds, presumably privy to the secret of longevity, were due to address the conference and tell how. So, despite the not inconsiderable risk of one's life being abruptly terminated during the chaos of Peking's morning rush-hour, the *Independent* sallied forth to discover the elixir of youth.

On arrival there seemed at first to have been some mistake. Across the entrance hall, a large banner was strung: "International seminar on reorganisation and bankruptcy of state-owned enterprises." This was therapy for old wrecks of a different sort, I supposed, but not quite what we were looking for.

Shrewdly guessing that the group of middle-aged women in silk Chinese pyjamas was probably not from the State Commission for the Restructuring of the Economy, I followed them through to a large hall where an audience full of earnest, but not particularly youthful-looking, people was waiting, well, earnestly. Here was the Second World Conference on Taiji Training, with its very promising slogan: "Adjust at the age of 40 and live to 100 years old". That was good, there was still time to "adjust".

Last month a Frenchwoman, Jeanne Calment, became the world's oldest recorded person, exceeding the former record of 120 years and 238 days. Her recipe for survival seemed relatively benign: keep laughing, dreaming, take exercise, avoid stress and do not work too hard. She even waited until the age of 117 before giving up smoking.

The conference participants, including 160 foreigners, clearly wanted something more austere. One of the organisers, Zeng Guang, a portly 44-year-old who the rest of the time is in "building materials import-export", gave his prescription: "Taiji boxing, static Qigong for relaxation, and therapeutic self-massage for the acupoints," he told me.

Dong Nianli, a more respectable 73 years, who is the vice-chairman of China's (three-year-old) Global Research Centre for Health and Longevity and (more encouragingly) president of the

Chinese Ice Hockey Association, firmly agreed. "With the best combination of these three ways, you will live up to 100 years for certain," he said firmly.

Moreover, the conference pamphlet bore the distinctive calligraphy of China's paramount leader, 91-year-old Deng Xiaoping. "Taiji boxing is good," it read. And would Mr Deng be attending? "He has not time," said Mr Zeng.

But, with nine years to go before his century, Mr Deng should be aware that Taiji alone is not enough, according to Mr Dong. "You must go to bed early and get up early. Don't smoke. Don't drink. Don't overeat. Select suitable exercise," he said. And sex? "According to scientists, people until 80 have sex. But not too much. Once a week is best. Too much will hurt your health."

Extensive research, based on China's 1990 census returns, was read to the audience with due reverence. China had 6,434 people over the age of 100, and the oldest was 136 (apologies to Mme Calment). Some two-thirds are vegetarian, "love to participate in labour and exercises" and "are of open character"; all "have a regular life".

For dissolute readers, the good news is that only two-fifths were teetotal, and barely a third practiced Taiji boxing. Only 11.21 per cent "drank tea properly", whatever that means.

But where was the proof? Where were those sprightly 100-year-olds we had been promised? "They did not come," admitted Mr Dong. It was not explained why. The oldest person who did attend was Liu Zhaoxiao, 85, from Shandong province, who said he had practiced the Dao brand of shadow boxing for 70 years and sleeps from 9pm to 4am. He was furious that the organisers had not asked him to demonstrate his martial arts skills during the closing ceremony and wanted us to heckle for his turn. Would he live to 100? "With the practice of Dao, yes!"

Teresa Poole

FLOWER POWER?

See page 11

As the Government seeks to defy Nolan, the battle between the executive and the judges is now more intense than at any time in recent history. **Stephen Ward** reports

Judges vs the Government



It used to be easy to caricature judges. They were reactionaries, they were Establishment, they never doubted the evidence of the police, they were so out of touch they didn't know who the Beatles were, and come hell or high water, they would back a Conservative government.

None of those truisms has shifted as much as the last - the two institutions are now at each other's throats. No Home Secretary has been as much criticised in judgements as Michael Howard. This week again he has been found to have acted beyond his powers by barring the head of the Moonies without hearing the latter's side of the story first. Today the Government's policy banning gays will be judged by the Court of Appeal, and judges have already warned the Government that it will face yet another defeat in the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg if it doesn't back down.

The Tories have started to hit back - Michael Howard has taken on the judiciary by saying the Government will remove some of their discretion on sentencing. The senior judge, Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice, told him he had no right to interfere.

Greater than all these is the Nolan inquiry. It began as a very traditional judge - John Major, in time-honoured tradition, thought he could bury sleaze by appointing a Law Lord, Lord Nolan, to investigate it. It had been done time after time with thorny problems like electoral reform or where to site an airport. Appoint a commission chaired by a judge and wait a couple of years for the report, confident that it would say little. And even if it did rock the boat a little, it could always be ignored.

Nolan and Scott have been different. When the Prime Minister established the Nolan committee in October 1994 he said he wanted an "ethical watchdog" to provide running repairs on standards in public life. Lord Nolan and his colleagues quite deliberately chose to stretch their terms of reference, and in its recommendations went far beyond what John Major could have expected, by insisting that the answer to sleaze allegations was for MPs to publish their outside earnings. The Tory party was aghast, and has refused.

So far we have a stand-off. Nolan has become a test of the relative credibility of the judiciary and the Government, and it is far from clear that the Government in its present state can see Nolan off.

Sir Richard Scott's inquiry threatens to blow up in an even bigger way when it reports later this year. Appointed to make the arms for Iraq affair go away, the judge has, like Lord Nolan, felt confident enough to interpret his brief widely. Minister after minister faced a cross-examination from his talented QC, Presley Baxendale, far more searching than any

How the two sides compare

Judges	Politicians
Selflessness	Selflessness
Judges: 5 Judges often earn less money than the barristers appearing before them, and less than they themselves earned when they were barristers.	Politicians: 2 Once many people went into politics chiefly from a desire to serve their country and their constituents. That time was not in the recent past.
Integrity	Integrity
Judges: 9 They are criticised for crassness and ignorance, but almost never for corruption. They still make the 'News of the World' if they visit a prostitute.	Politicians: 3 Giving politicians any marks at all is controversial, but some are much maligned and these help to bring up the average of the others.
Objectivity	Objectivity
Judges: 7 Supposedly what they are there for, but some still have blind spots, for example on rape.	Politicians: 3 They follow the party line. A piece of paper arrives from the whips telling them how to vote.
Accountability	Accountability
Judges: 3 They have to make all their judgements in public, with reasons, and can be appealed if they get it wrong. But almost never lose their jobs.	Politicians: 7 They do face re-election, a thought looming large just now for all Conservatives with a majority of less than five figures.
Openness	Openness
Judges: 3 In court, formal, legalistic. Outside court, they are traditionally silent about their motivations, feelings and beliefs.	Politicians: 2 There is something in the nature of the job which makes them consider everything they say not on its merits but on its electoral appeal.
Honesty	Honesty
Judges: 9 When a judge was caught smuggling, and had to resign, it was so rare as to be sensational.	Politicians: 8 Seems generous, but standards vary. Taking large consultancies or high-paid directorships may be distasteful, but is not dishonest.
Leadership	Leadership
Judges: 2 Not what judges exercise. Get some marks for recent enlightened Law Lords and Court of Appeal judgments on human rights and medical ethics.	Politicians: 5 Some you might follow, but since Mrs Thatcher the Government has been short of charismatic figures.
Total: 38	Total: 30

thing they had faced in the Commons. Again, to the horror of politicians, they found themselves cast in the role of expert witness, but sitting in the dock. They must feel threatened by the imminent report of his findings and a vague sense of betrayal that they are being turned over by what they had hoped would be one of their own.

The outcome of the contest between politicians and the judiciary remains unpredictable. As the credibility and authority of politicians has waned in many democracies, so the power of the judiciary has correspondingly tended to rise. In Italy, for example, government has been deeply undermined by a series of corruption investigations by judges. In the United States, even with a new mandate, President Clinton found he lacked the clout to bring in a state health service, or to allow

now abandoned law against domestic violence. He is both a member of the Cabinet and the head of the judiciary. And he has found himself squeezed between his twin constitutional roles, now being made a scapegoat in the attempted revenge of the politicians.

Mackay has been crucial in the appointment of a new kind of judge. He recommends appointments to the Prime Minister and he has chosen some of the most liberal ever, including the latest Law Lords (notably Lord Nolan). In 1985 he abolished the ban on judges making public pronouncements.

Three years ago the top men in the judiciary retired. Out went the Lord Chief Justice Lord Lane and in came Lord Taylor as the senior judge. Out went Lord Donaldson, Master of the Rolls and top civil judge, and in came Sir Thomas Bingham. Each man was 13 years younger than his predecessor. Lord Taylor was not exactly a man of the people, but as a grammar school boy from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, he was not of the traditional establishment. Happy to give interviews to the press and comfortable talking to ministers, he cut a new kind of figure as the chief judge.

This new generation of judges, including Mr Justice Sedley who gave judgement on Mr Moon, have been responsible for a series of judicial reviews of ministerial decisions which have criticised government ministers. John Patten, as Education Secretary, was told he could not force schools to carry out his tests. Michael Howard has been repeatedly criticised over immigration, over parole, and over his Criminal Justice Act and its effect on travellers.

Meanwhile, the Government also keeps falling foul of The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. To the beleaguered Government, it seems like part of the same conspiracy.

Even Law Lords, traditionally the ultimate caricature of a judge, have produced some extraordinarily liberal decisions. The lords have increasingly taken decisions to protect individuals against the powers of government and large institutions. Last April Michael Howard (again) was forced to abandon a new scheme for criminal injury compensation after the lords ruled he had exceeded his powers by failing to consult Parliament.

It is not that judges have suddenly become political subversives, they are just doing what they have always done, and are trying to uphold the rule of law. It is more that the Government has passed laws that erode human rights, brought in sloppily drafted legislation and attempted to use laws for things for which they were not intended. It is their own fault that a Conservative government is in an unprecedented conflict with the judiciary.



Who are the Government?

Cabinet Ministers
Earn £60,819, and receive an allowance for office costs of £42,754.
They head government departments and are members of the Cabinet. There are 21 men and two women. About 55 per cent went to public school followed by Oxbridge; 9 per cent went to Eton.

Ministers of State
Earn £30,307-£48,835, and receive an allowance for office costs of £42,754.
They act as deputies to cabinet ministers. There are 27 men and one woman. About 58 per cent went to public school followed by Oxbridge; 22 per cent went to Eton.

Parliamentary Under-Secretaries of State
Earn £41,065, and receive an allowance for office costs of £42,754.
There are 29 men and three women. About 50 per cent were educated at public school followed by Oxbridge; 10 per cent went to Eton.

Back-benchers
Earn £33,189 and receive an allowance for office costs of £42,754.
Many back-benchers earn more than £100,000, excluding office cost allowance, through other outside earnings. There are 231 men, of whom one is Asian, and 12 women. The 200 back-benchers hold a total of 276 paid directorships of companies and 356 paid consultancies. Douglas Hurd gets £250,000 a year for his directorship of NatWest, and Sir Norman Fowler earns £120,000 through directorships and chairmanships.

Cathy Newman

Wilkes's

Some of Wilkes's more elderly colleagues were no doubt relieved that Christine Keeler boycotted the party to launch the book *Great Parliamentary Scandals* by the former Tory MP turned scribbler Matthew Parris. Ms Keeler was offended, because it failed to point out that she was "sent down" for perjury, for protecting a friend of hers. She curiously informed Mr Parris that she would not be attending his bash in the cellars of the Churchill War Rooms in Whitehall. This Churchill War Rooms in Whitehall, who would have enjoyed chatting about old times with his one-time mistress. Still, the party went with a swing, with victims of more recent parliamentary scandals gamely supping their chardonnay, including the Tory MPs Michael Mates, Tim Yeo and Michael Brown. Mr Parris recalled meeting Mandy Rice Davies in a radio studio when he was an MP. She said he was the first Tory MP Davies in a radio studio when he was an MP. She said he was the first Tory MP Davies in a radio studio when he was an MP. She said he was the first Tory MP Davies in a radio studio when he was an MP.



Christine Keeler: party pooper

the twin-engine jet that Prince Charles pranged on a tricky landing in the Scottish isles. Bunter was so pleased to see the crate back in service that he decided to cheer up Prince Charles by having a photograph of himself taken with the plane, and duly dispatched it to the Prince.

Wilkes hears that Sir Teddy Taylor, redoubtable and previously "whipless" Euro-sceptic, has been characteristically honest in dealing with the 35-odd farmers who have become his constituents since boundary reorganisation. Under the changes his constituency of Southend East becomes Rochford and Southend East and takes on a new slice of rural Essex. But Sir Teddy - no friend, to put it mildly, of the dependency culture generated by the Common Agricultural Policy - has been honest in dealing with the 35-odd farmers who have become his constituents since boundary reorganisation. Under the changes his constituency of Southend East becomes Rochford and Southend East and takes on a new slice of rural Essex. But Sir Teddy - no friend, to put it mildly, of the dependency culture generated by the Common Agricultural Policy - has been honest in dealing with the 35-odd farmers who have become his constituents since boundary reorganisation.

ready, willing, and eager to serve once again.

By contrast, the Northern Ireland minister John Wheeler, another candidate spurned by Kensington and Chelsea, has confided to Wilkes that he is reluctantly planning to stand down from Parliament. He was understandably a bit miffed to be asked whether his Northern Ireland duties would give him enough time to turn up to parties in the constituency.

Meanwhile, do not rule out the possibility that Nicholas Scott, for all his troubles over his impending drink-driving case, could actually win when the party turns out to make its selection next Friday. Wilkes's spies say he is up for a fighting speech and that his most ardent supporters are ready to turn up in force.

Mary Robinson, the Irish President, said on her meeting with the Queen last week in London that she hoped that the Queen would visit Ireland. Some guests at the reception asked the Queen whether she would go. She is said to have replied: "I hope to when things have settled."

Or did she say she would settle in Ireland? Wilkes can hardly blame her.

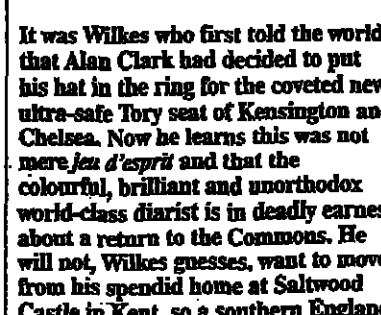
Before Mohamed Al Fayed gave evidence to the privileges committee, a glittering green and gold horse-drawn carriage bearing the Harrods logo parked on double yellow lines outside the gates of the House of Commons. Two lady parking wardens stood by, wondering what to do, when Tony Banks, the cheeky Labour chaplain, said: "Go on. Issue them with a parking ticket." They resisted the temptation.

There are homines in being pushed sideways to the ludicrous Department of National Heritage, as Wilkes's underrated Labour friend Lewis Moonie found out this week. His shadow portfolio brought with it a coveted ticket to the Rangers vs Juventus match. Sadly, he was prevented from smoking his favourite pipe tobacco at the fiercely Protestant Glasgow ground. "I don't think it would be wise to get out my packet of Three Nuns at Ibrox Park," he smiled.

Wilkes is a man of many parts and this week his role has extended to conveying the apologies of the editor of the *Independent* to Ian Bruce, the Tory member for Dorset South. Bruce was naturally put out when colleagues started to greet him in awkward with strange handshakes and tips at the pinstriped trouser leg, the problem being that this noble organ had wrongly named him as a leading Freemason.

The source of the error was Labour Research, the union-funded hammer of the Tories. It had combed through the latest Masonic Year Book for a two-page piece on "Who's Who and claimed it had found four sitting Conservative members in the list. Mr Bruce was given the starring role of sitting on "a number of United Grand Lodge of England committees".

Closer inspection of the Masonic listings, alas, reveals a rather different picture. Three Brucses feature: Messrs Arthur and Robert and one Major Ian Bruce. The Dorset



Ian Bruce: no funny handshakes

Nicholas Soames, former quarry to the Prince of Wales, used the Queen's Flight for a ministerial trip to the Middle East the other day. He was entertained to hear that the aeroplane in which he flew was none other than

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Labour misses the point again

Margaret Beckett missed an opportunity yesterday. As Labour's new Shadow Trade and Industry Minister, she has acquired responsibility for the famous BT deal, launched with such fanfare by Tony Blair at the Labour Party conference. The plan involves British Telecom offering free connections on the so-called information superhighway to public institutions such as libraries and schools in exchange for BT being allowed access to the home entertainment business by 2002. Yesterday the telecommunications regulator Don Cruickshank joined in the *Independent's* criticism of this deal, arguing that Labour will only succeed in encouraging BT's monopoly, which the regulator has spent the last decade trying to counter. Better to allow rival companies to service the public sector as well: competition produces better service and keener prices. It was Mrs Beckett's chance to state that New Labour is not interested in flashy, Wilsonian deals that distort the market, but the construction of sound industrial policy based on an appropriately regulated market economy. Instead she savaged the watchdog.

It is not that there are no sound arguments for allowing BT into the home entertainment market in 2002. By then the competing cable TV companies should be established as a serious force in the UK industry. Perhaps Ofcom could require all cable and telecoms companies to connect their systems free to public institutions. That is one way to avoid confining the less well-off to a slow lane on the superhighway. But for Mrs Beckett to argue that Labour is encouraging competition by

allowing BT into a new market misses the point. BT is easily the dominant corporate player in the UK communications market and probably will still be so by 2002. Government's job is to ensure that a regulator working at arm's length is given an appropriate set of powers to protect the consumer against market domination by any player, rather than to make lunges in favour of one company. It is all a question of balance.

The principles of such an approach were well set out by Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, in bold speeches during the summer. Mr Brown presented Labour as the party of competition, the consumer's and therefore the people's friend. This route is rich in promise for New Labour, but it requires the party to resist the old corporatist temptations of trying to run companies from Victoria Street.

At the same time, Labour has embarked upon a wide-ranging discussion of the way that regulation of the privatised utilities should be organised. Should there be a single regulator for telecommunications and broadcasting? Since the industries are converging, almost certainly, yes. Should the one-person regulator give way to a panel? Less clear-cut. Is the British way of regulation, whereby prices are controlled by the imposition of formulae linked to inflation, still the best? On balance, probably it is.

But Labour will not achieve sound regulation in any sphere if it conveys the impression that ministers would be phoning the regulator every five minutes about some brilliant plan cooked up with another captain of industry. Mrs Beckett must show she grasps this. So must Mr Blair.

Stripping down puritanism

When it comes to nudity, the British are the most puritanical in Europe, according to the Independent Television Commission. It has been testing opinion on nakedness in advertisements and discovered that we don't like our suburban living rooms filled, without warning, with nipples and bottoms.

All of this sounds depressingly familiar. It suggests that we have changed little in a century. We are still oppressed by Victorian prudery, still a country of bathers who struggle under huge towels to put on 10-gallon shorts, a nation more comfortable dressing up in period costume than showing off our birthday suits.

We've never been at ease with the human body. There are no British equivalents of the great Italian and Dutch painters of the nude. Our finest artists of the human form, the likes of Gainsborough and Millet, excelled in representing clothing, not its absence. The few modern British painters, such as Lucien Freud and Jenny Saville, who portray nudity do so in a way that speaks at least partly of disgust.

But hang on a minute. If the British are so prudish, how come Page Three girls are allowed to strut their stuff, top shelves of newsgroups are awash with pornography and the television nipple count often soars in the small hours of the morning?

The answer is that the British are tolerant about most things provided they are kept in their place. Large numbers of breasts publicly displayed are fine as long as people expect to find them there. So the Queen may look stony-faced, but she would never be shocked during an overseas visit to encounter a troop of bare-

breasted dancers. That would not, however, do on Horseguards Parade.

Likewise, there are complicated notions of propriety for showing nakedness. The principles were best expressed in 1979, when the Williams' Report on Obscenity and Film Censorship argued that just about any material should be available for those seeking it out, but people should not stumble upon images they would find distasteful. So the most risqué should be kept under the counter, out of sight.

The same principle applies today. Britain has a host of rules about the hours at which various levels of nudity are permitted on television. In contrast, France, Germany and Italy, for example, have less state control and fewer strictures.

But there is another factor that may help to explain British attitudes to nudity. It concerns the question of female breasts, which are the main area of controversy about nakedness. The British are clearly not at home with the chief function of the breast, namely to feed babies. One third of mothers never even try breast-feeding and only one in five is still doing it six months after birth, even though the Department of Health recommends continuing for a year. These figures are the lowest in Europe.

Given that we are so unhappy about using breasts, is it little wonder that we are wary about looking at them? All of which suggests how we might start to chip away at surviving prudish Victorian values. Instead of worrying about the censorship of nipples from shower advertisements, we should concentrate on providing a few images of them in babies' mouths.

ANOTHER VIEW Mark Brann

Blessed are the persecuted

We shall win in the end. History shows, remarkably, that the persecuted often become the victors.

I am sure that Reverend Moon is very sad and disappointed that he cannot come to Britain on his world tour. I know he loves this country and respects its great tradition of freedom. The Home Secretary has made a grave error, and my fellow members of the Unification Church are seeking urgent redress.

For many of us it has been 17 years since we have seen Reverend Moon and we remember that visit with great fondness. Why has this man of God been refused entry to this country? We are hurt, baffled and angry and yet many of us have learned patience and hope from previous confrontations with bigotry and prejudice.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ said: "Blessed are ye, when men persecute you." Truly we have been blessed by Michael Howard. We had 48 hours after being notified by the Home Secretary that Reverend Moon had been refused entry to this country, and to bring this injustice to his many supporters' attention, 48 hours to try and gather enough representation to present to the Home Secretary.

Michael Howard clearly indicated that no matter what representation he received supporting Reverend Moon, he would still refuse him entry. It seems a no-

win situation. Nevertheless, he has sparked off an outcry that must be heard.

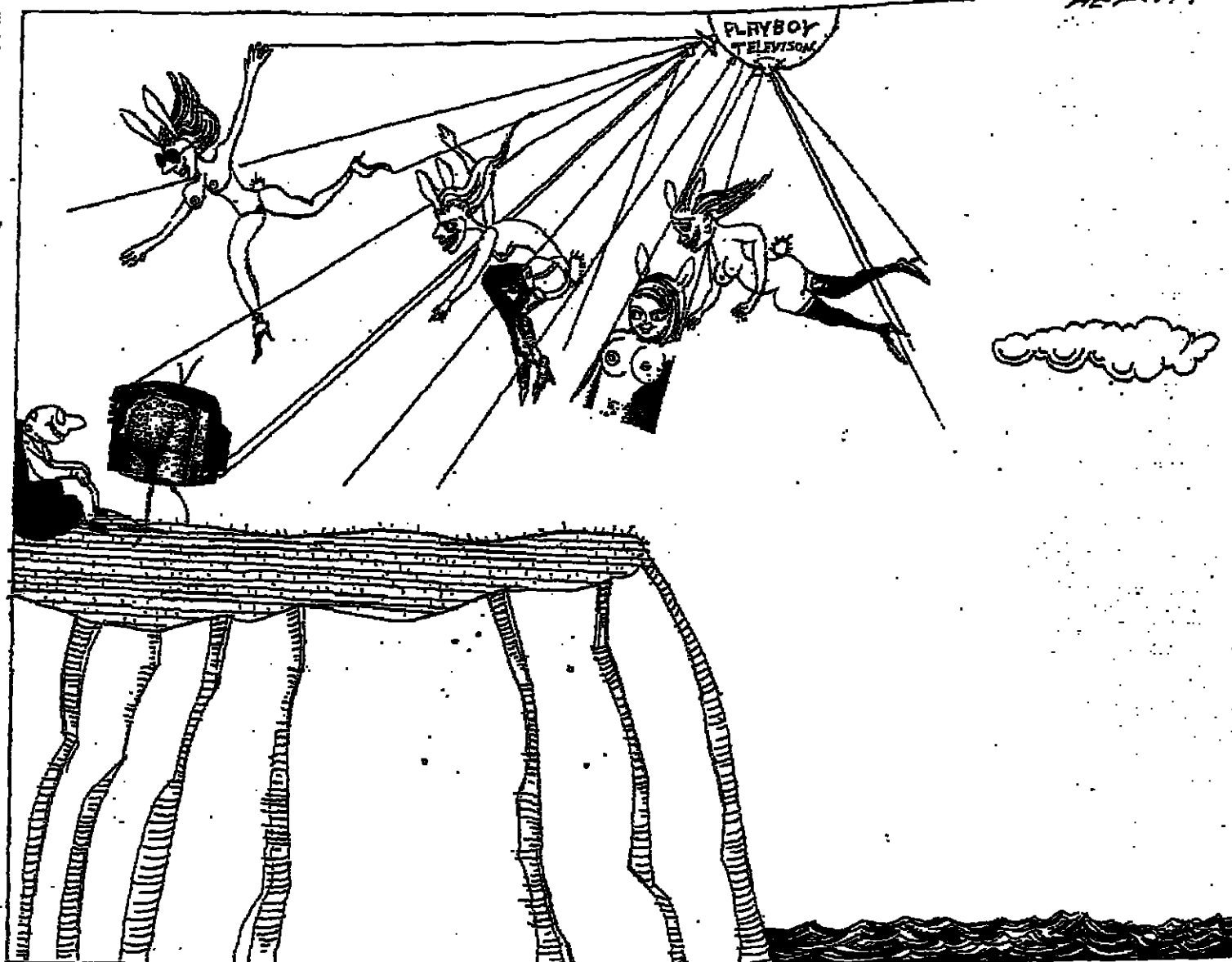
Because he never gave up, despite being tortured, imprisoned, vilified on many occasions throughout his life, I believe Reverend Moon demonstrates a faith and a love of God and mankind that could have been the turning point to change this country's moral decline.

That opportunity has temporarily been denied to the people of Britain, but we shall not stop until this unjust ban has been quashed and those people are free to make up their own minds.

I remember the day Reverend Moon heard the news that a jury in the United States had found him guilty of what everybody knew was a trumped-up charge of tax evasion. He smiled and shook his head. Then turning to one of his closest followers he said: "How many times is that now?" And the man laughed with him. He has been, like St Paul, like Martin Luther King, and like so many other men who gave their lives for freedom and for mankind, imprisoned often.

Millions of Christian people throughout the US demonstrated at the injustice. My earnest hope tonight is that, whether or not they agree with his beliefs, many similar people in Britain will feel as they did.

The writer is president of the Unification Church in Britain.



"There'll be blue birds over the white cliffs of Dover..."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Concepts of cruelty, class... and cookery

From Mr Elliot Morley, MP

Sir: Polly Toynbee made a pretty feeble defence of hunting. All the traditional defences for hunting – it controls foxes, it protects foxes (yes, I know they are contradictory), it's humane, it has support in the countryside, it protects the environment – have long been discarded.

So what's left? Labour should respect the rights of an eccentric minority group. Not much of an argument, particularly as there are lots of minority groups that are not just eccentric, but pretty unpleasant, who could resort to that. Nor would a ban stop the hunters' "fun". Hunts could switch to drag hunting if they choose.

Labour is committed to a free vote on this issue so that parliament can decide once and for all. This has been the parrot cry, from judges to the National Trust, as an excuse for not taking action. As far as the obsessive enthusiasm for the sport is concerned, this includes breaking agreements with John McFall, MP, about a form of words to protect wild mammals from deliberate cruelty in return for dropping the anti-hunting parts of the Wild Mammals (Protection) Bill.

The chance of this Bill becoming law has been ruined in the Lords by unnecessary amendments insisted on by the Blood Sports Lobby who are prepared to allow deliberate cruelty to continue rather than compromise their "sport". That's the kind of sinister cynicism Polly Toynbee should be concerned about.

Yours sincerely,
ELLIOT MORLEY
MP for Gleanfield and
Scunthorpe (Lab)
House of Commons
London, SW1
1 November

The writer is Labour spokesperson for animal welfare.

From Mr Colin Booth

Sir: It is most unfortunate that our society cannot discuss mat-

ters of humane behaviour and social mores without becoming dragged into the mire of party politics, where few subjects are dealt with in a balanced manner.

My wife and I have only lived in the country for seven years. This is not thought remotely long enough for an income to qualify to comment on traditional village affairs. When the hunt meets on the top of our hill, I feel mildly repelled by most of those who attend – riders, followers, spectators, saboteurs, and police. However, even if I felt more strongly, I would agree with Polly Toynbee that it would be hypocritical for a meat-eater to seek to ban fox-hunting on the grounds of cruelty.

There is, nevertheless, an important dichotomy in our law that should be addressed – the traditional working-class sports of badger-baiting and cock-fighting are illegal on grounds of cruelty. Either these activities should be immediately legalised, or fox-hunting (and arguably other forms of hunting too) should be banned. Only after one of these alternatives has been implemented can a "level playing-field" be established, and the issue of bloodsports be debated on its merits, rather than on the basis of class prejudice.

Yours sincerely,
COLIN BOOTH
Westbury-sub-Mendip,
Somerset
1 November

From Mr John Bryant

Sir: Polly Toynbee argues that fox hunting should not be outlawed because it would "trespass on the rights of a small, if eccentric bunch of people". That argument also applied to the abolition of bear and bull baiting, dog fighting, badger baiting and many other forms of animal abuse.

Similarly, it is not good enough to defend fox hunting on the grounds that other abuses of animals are more cruel. The majority of the public, the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats and

30 Conservative MPs have been persuaded that the cruelty involved in hunting is unjustified – just as our predecessors were persuaded that the cruelty involved in dog fighting and bear baiting was unacceptable.

All legislation impinges on someone's activities – otherwise we would not need it. If the public and their parliamentary representatives decide that for the benefit of a civilised society a minority must have their activities curtailed, so be it. That is what democracy and Government is all about.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BRYANT
Wildlife Officer
League Against
Cruel Sports
London, SE1
1 November

From Mr Simon Sandberg

Sir: Polly Toynbee's article defending fox hunting was fantastically wrong-headed. To cite but one example, she says that "foxes are inedible". Patience Gray, in her classic book *Honey from a Weed*, provides a recipe for *La Volpe alla cacciatora*.

She suggests that the skinned animal will need to be hung in the frost, or otherwise left in running water for three days. Then one simply cuts up the fox, immerses it in olive oil until liquor is released from the meat and then re-absorbed. These preliminaries are essential, she says, for removing any acidity. Then simply add garlic, herbs, wine, tomatoes and some stock. She says the same method works equally well for badger, though the badger will need a little more time to cook through.

I should imagine the case for fox hunting would be much strengthened if the MPH could be prevailed upon to serve up such a meal at the end of a successful hunt.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON SANDBERG
London, SW11
1 November

Slogging sisters

From Ms Linda Bellis

Sir: Genevieve Fox is quite right to ask where all the feminists have gone (31 October). The answer is that they remain working away in the unglamorous world of women's aid, rape crisis women's centres, etc. Publishing was and is an important part of feminism but it never was the forefront for black and white working-class women. Whether it was consciousness-raising groups or later Greenham Common, a great deal of work went on that did not include Oxbridge-educated, middle-class women and, what is more, it still does.

For too long a small clique of women have assumed that they could generalise from their own narrow experience and speak for all of us. They have been aided and abetted by their brothers (and husbands) in the media. This is not feminism and it never was. Feminism is about the liberation of all women, not the career development of the already privileged, although it might include this. All women have some things in common but not all things. If we fail to acknowledge the real differences that exist between us by virtue of our class, race, sexuality, disability, age or religion, we will continue to fail to make the changes that many of us want to see.

Humour might help.
Yours faithfully,
LINDA BELLIS
London, N4

Seals of approval

From Mr Waldemar Januszczak

Sir: David Lister (front page, 1 November) suggests that Damien Hirst's *Mother and Child Divided* has been temporarily removed from the Turner Prize exhibition "with a view, perhaps, to the reaction of others unmentioned – animal rights activists, for instance".

What conspiratorial nonsense! The sculpture is indeed being strengthened by new seals, not because it is any sort of danger to

the public, or to protect it from imaginary animal rights protesters, but because it is an important work of British art which all of us want to last not one year or 10 years, but hundreds of years. Art lovers in the future will be just as keen to see Damien Hirst's work as art lovers today.

Yours sincerely,
WALDEMAR JANUSZCZAK
Commissioning Editor
Arts and Music
Channel 4
London, SW1

Battered women, disputed figures

From Mr Oliver Kamm

Sir: Fran Abrams's disturbing claim ("Just imagine", 23 October) that one woman in four has suffered physical abuse from a male partner is unsupported by evidence.

The most thorough and statistically robust studies of the prevalence of domestic violence are the two representative-sample National Family Violence surveys conducted in the United States by the academics Richard Gelles and Murray Straus. They suggest that around 100,000 women a year suffer serious injury as a result of domestic disputes. That is a shocking statistic in itself, of course, but it does suggest that Ms Abrams should have been citing a battery rate of less than 1 per cent, not 25 per cent. Even on a broad definition, only 16 per cent of couples could be said to engage in violence; the great majority of such acts are minor incidents, such as pushing and jostling, that cause no physical injury, and around half of them are committed by women.

Yours faithfully,
OLIVER KAMM
London, SW9
31 October

Donor and egg conundrum

From Dr John Carroll

Sir: One thing that no one is considering in the furore over the selling of human eggs ("Agency 'trades' in women's eggs", 1 November) is how this situation could have been avoided.

The desperate shortage of eggs for treatment has compelled patient groups, clinicians and ethicists alike to devise new strategies for increasing the supply of donors. Whether or not one approves of the actions of the Hope Agency, it is understandable that patients stuck on lengthy waiting lists will resort to desperate measures. Research being conducted in Britain is aimed at developing new methods for increasing the supply of human eggs for treatment and thus avoiding the situation that hundreds of patients find themselves in.

This research involves using donated ovarian tissue as a source of immature eggs which can be developed outside the body. Scientists are already able to mature adult eggs through the final stages (36 hours) of development, an advance which

is important for patients who do not have their own eggs. However, much more research is required to make this technique more efficient, to extend it to younger eggs, and to develop methods for cryopreserving (freezing) eggs, so that an egg bank can be established.

It will be some time before we can avoid being reliant on the altruistic women (whether paid or not) who go through painful and time-consuming operations to donate their eggs for the treatment of others. But with continued research we are drawing closer to that point. If society does not invest in the future, however, by recognising the importance of basic research and encouraging its continuation, patients will continue to find themselves in the desperate circumstances where they have no alternative but to pay for donated eggs.

Yours faithfully,
JULIET TIZZARD
The Progress Educational
Trust
London, W1
1 November

Too big a slice of the pie for London

From Mr Michael Paraskos

Sir: It is a novel argument Terence Conran uses to justify all this spending of National Lottery money in London ("London deserves to get lucky", 1 November). While he is concerned for the poor, the largest contributors to the Lottery's funds, his solution is to spend the money in the richest part of the country, apparently to benefit mainly foreign businessmen and tourists. Otherwise they might mistake London for Frankfurt!

While we clearly have a duty to help such geographically-challenged visitors to our country, we need to remember also that our "national culture" is precisely that – national. Concentrating the monuments to this culture in such a rarefied space as London does not, as Conran claims, make them accessible, rather it deprives the majority of people of what is rightly theirs.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL PARASKOS
Head of History of Art
University College Scarborough
The University of York
Scarborough

Barbaric scientist

From Dr Steve Jones

Sir: I am the Steve Jones referred to by Bryan Appleyard ("A disease that's made in the mind", 31 October) as a "scientific barbarian". Perhaps it will help your readers to understand why Mr Appleyard is so upset if they learn that the phrase ("philosophy is to science what pornography is to sex") was coined by me in a review of his own remarkably silly book, *Understanding the Present*. Yours faithfully,
STEVE JONES
London, NW1
31 October

Armed response

From Mr Alan Stableford

Sir: By her own admission, Kate Rankin (letter, 28 October) has caused a potentially dangerous situation to arise as a result of her negligence when driving. The proper immediate response in such a situation would be to assess the situation, concentrate on the job in hand and get on with her journey. A totally incorrect response would be to lose further control by brandishing her arms around in some arcane gesture of apology. Yours faithfully,
ALAN STABLEFORD
Gravesend, Kent
30 October

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number. (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

هناك امتحان الاصل

Fundamentally wrong on families

Their tired proposals ignore history and reason. The middle-aged moralists must be challenged

Just when we thought family matters were being handled sensibly by the Government the champions of family fundamentalism are once again dominating the political agenda. It began with the *Daily Mail's* campaign to block the Family Homes and Domestic Violence Bill, then the BBC's *Who Killed the Family?* by Melanie Phillips. The programme certainly lived up to its sensationalist title. A ragbag of suspects—Sixties permissiveness, radical feminism, excessive libertarianism and overly liberal divorce laws—were hauled up before her kangaroo court and found guilty. This was no sober evaluation of the issues. Instead, home videos of domestic harmony were crudely intercut with slow-motion replays of joy-riding dissolute youths, their masked faces emphasising the gulf between contemporary dehumanised society and intimate family lives in the past. The argument was one-dimensional and it was abundantly clear who were the good guys and who were the bad.

But what was most striking about the programme was the absence of the voices of people forming families today. As so often, those who lined up to opine about them—from Janet Daley to the Chief Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks—were all middle-aged or older. So what of the core thesis? Is the family dead and if so who killed it?

Few can dispute that family life has changed dramatically over the past 30 years. Most people cohabit before getting married, a high proportion of marriages end in divorce, the number of single parents continues to rise and a third of babies are now born outside

of marriage. But these trends are only a partial picture. Most "illegitimate" babies are born to ordinary cohabiting couples. Most people are still marrying, still having children and still just about managing to sustain long-term relationships. Even after break-ups many people want to remarry or settle down again in the future, and people enter relationships almost as quickly as they exit from them. One survey found that while in a single year 3 per cent of children experienced parental separation, 2.5 per cent saw the arrival of a step-parent or the return of a natural parent.

The familial fundamentalists also have remarkably little sense of history. They talk of the "family" as if it were a solid, unchanging, easily definable institution which has only in the past few decades undergone earth-shattering transformation. This is nonsense. Family life was far more variable in the past than we have been led to believe. Cohabitation, remarriage and births outside of marriage to common-law couples were not inventions of the Sixties. Between the mid-18th and mid-19th century, historians estimate, as many as one-fifth of all couples in England and Wales were cohabiting either as a prelude to marriage or as an alternative to it and,



HELEN WILKINSON

from the 1750s, the rate of illegitimacy rose to unprecedented levels.

But by far the biggest failing of the zealots is their lack of credible solutions beyond rewinding the tape and freezing the frame. Nor are they clear about how to do this. So we're left with an incoherent package of incentives and punishments, carrots and sticks. Single parents are first in line with proposals to cut benefits to force them back to work, and to make qualification for council housing more stringent. Feckless fathers are also targets with some moralists advocating an extension of the principles of the Child Support Act to punish men further. Others are eager to rein in liberal divorce laws.

Such policies lead to absurdities. Penalising single parents would hurt children without improving the stability of relationships. By making divorce harder, relationships between divorcing couples would sour even further, creating difficulties for their children. Even moderate reforms to allow women to evict violent and abusive boyfriends, are deemed unacceptable violations of the institution of marriage.

The traditionalists sense that the winds of change are blowing in their direction. Janet Daley said as much yesterday in the *Times*. So, as the budget approaches, we should steel our-

selves for a recycling of tired proposals such as raising the married couples' tax allowance. Some Tory ladies might even renew their call for a £1,000 marriage bonus, paid after 10 years of "successful" marriage.

But experience suggests that financial inducements have little, if any, effect on people's behaviour. Divorce is costly and even though women (and children) are hardest hit, they clearly feel that the price of freedom is worth paying because women initiate most divorces.

Nor do incentives look likely to encourage a younger generation to rush to the altar. First-time marriage

who frequently find themselves taking up equally absurd positions: change is seen as inherently positive, few costs are recognised. Yet both positions are flawed. The familists because their moral authoritarianism means they are unable to cope with diversity and difference. The libertarians because their unwillingness to acknowledge that freedom has brought a new set of problems is motivated by the fear of giving ammunition to their opponents.

What we need now is a debate that starts somewhere between apocalypse and complacency. A starting point would be an acknowledgement that families come in all shapes and sizes, outside marriage as well as inside, and that greater freedom has brought new problems, as well as new solutions, for cohabiting couples and married couples. But we also need to face the fact that while children need parents—and other adults—if they are to grow up happy, confident and stable, the best way to achieve this is not to bully or cajole unhappy parents to get married or to stay married or to make divorce more gladiatorial. We must help people to make deals and compromises instead of apportioning blame.

rates are at their lowest possible level since 1889. Nearly half of the women born in the Sixties have cohabited and a fifth of these are expected to give birth while living with a partner.

Beyond fiscal incentives, punishments and moral exhortation, the traditionalists have no grand idea, no practical solutions for strengthening young families or reversing the deterioration of their financial position. Instead, all the zealots have to offer is anger and bile.

Unfortunately, their capacity to fuel moral panic serves to polarise the debate among their opponents—especially an older generation of feminists

We must help people to make deals and compromises instead of apportioning blame

A drama worth waiting for...

About 30 years ago I conceived a great desire to write a play like one of Tom Stoppard's plays. I know exactly when it happened. It happened just as I was coming out of the first Stoppard play I had ever seen. It happened again the next time, just as I was coming out of the second Stoppard play I saw. It grew to be a habit after a while—in fact, eventually I started getting the urge to write plays like Stoppard's just before I went into new plays by Stoppard.

I never did get round to writing a play like Stoppard at the time. But I did work out the title. It was going to be called *Waiting for Stoppard*. I wasn't too sure about the plot, although I knew two companions would be sitting around talking a lot of the time—as they tend to in quite a few Stoppard plays. In Beckett plays, too, but I have never enjoyed Samuel Beckett the way I do Stoppard.

What I did achieve at the time was a meeting with Tom Stoppard, and it was a mind-boggling encounter because it showed me that what we call Stoppardian is not limited to the stage. My first of very few encounters with the playwright rivals, in its Stoppardian quality, anything he ever wrote.

I was a junior member of the *Punch* staff at the time, and Tom Stoppard was a guest at one of the regular *Punch* lunches, weekly events to which the editor used to ask famous people he wouldn't meet otherwise. Normally, I stood around before lunch, bracing myself with alcohol for the ordeal, but on this occasion I leapt in and secured myself a seat next to my hero. I found myself sitting between him and John Wells, another theatre person I had never met before.

I knew it was going to be a fairly low-profile lunch for me between the heavyweights of the serious showbiz scene, and so it proved. Wells and Stoppard conversed straight across me about all the arts and showbiz celebrities they knew, more or less ignoring me (who knew none of them) and letting me sink lower and lower in my chair to improve audibility between them.

The conversation started, as I remember, with Stoppard asking John Wells how Eleanor Bron was getting along.

"Oh, she's fine," said John. "She's acting up in Newcastle, in a play with John Fortune..."

"She's terribly good," said Stoppard.

"I think John Fortune's rather good, too," said Wells.

"Yes, he's very good," said Stoppard.

"Incidentally," said Wells, "did I hear you were doing some work with Jonathan Miller? I've always wanted to work with Jonathan."

"Isn't he wonderful?" said Stoppard. "Yes, nothing is fixed but I hope to be getting together with him soon."

Sickening, isn't it? I felt rather as if I were Enid Blyton who had got caught up with the existentialist mob at Jean-Paul Sartre's table and couldn't even catch the waiter's eye to get the bill and the hell out. But then something happened that made me change my mind. By the time lunch was halfway through, there was a hush between the two, almost as if they had now run out of mutual acquaintances to discuss, almost as if, even for such men-about-London as these, there was a limit to the amount of people they knew. So they started filling in a bit of background detail about the people they'd already talked about, with Wells asking first:

"So, when did you first run into Eleanor Bron?"

There was a small silence.

"Oh," said Stoppard, "I've never actually met her, but I



MILES KINGTON

knew you and she were colleagues, so I just thought I'd inquire. Incidentally, you and Jonathan Miller... how well do you know him?"

"Not at all," said Wells. "It was just that I'd heard that you and he might be collaborating, so I was naturally curious..."

During the first half of lunch the two of them had cemented a new friendship, using as cement the names and doings of their well-known friends. Then they had suddenly discovered they had no friends in common at all, and the second half of lunch was spent unravelling the new friendship, with the cement turning to dust all over the floor, and only me there as a silent chronicler to witness this Stoppardian situation, right down to the moment when the two of them left lunch and departed, the best of strangers.

Was it then that I got the idea for *Waiting for Stoppard*? It may have been. Anyway, I have finally written the play and it is on in London for a brief run (until 18 November) at the Southwark Playhouse and, yes, this has turned belatedly into a naked plug for a product, but if it takes me 30 years to write each play, I won't get many chances.

Meanwhile, it would be nice if John Wells and Tom Stoppard came to see the play, though perhaps not on the same night. I'm not sure I could sit through that conversation again.

Edward Lister argues that his borough's pilot voucher scheme will give power to parents

Choice begins in the nursery

Choice is today the most overworked word in the politician's vocabulary. Nowhere is it used more freely than in the education debate.

Education spokesmen from all the parties will say they are in favour of choice. But the future that re-emerged yesterday over the Government's new vouchers plan for the parents of four-year-olds, suggests that we have some way to go before we are all speaking the same language.

In Wandsworth we know exactly what we mean by choice. It is not a spin doctor's soundbite but rather a simple philosophy that flows from one central premise: it is parents who have the real power to drive up standards in our schools. In our borough the pilot scheme will give parents of 3,300 four-year-olds vouchers worth £1,100.

At present we still do not have an education system in this country that puts the parent in control. We have a highly structured system that is the result of decades of central planning and weak-kneed deference to the teaching unions.

The Government has made great strides towards increasing parental choice. The national curriculum, testing and the publication of school results are all designed to give parents more information about their schools than was ever possible before.

With core subjects guaranteed and greater openness bringing improved accountability, schools have been encouraged to diversify. In Wandsworth we now have only one old-style comprehensive secondary school. All the others are offering specialisms that emphasise their own distinctive educational approach.

All of these gains have been fought every step of the way by the unions and their surrogates in the Labour Party. It's the same unholy alliance that is now crying foul over the vouchers scheme. What are they so afraid of? After all, they say they believe in parental choice. But of course they want that choice to be restricted to the current limited range of school types. They do not want poor teachers removed nor failing schools closed. They are afraid of anything that smacks of specialisation or the dreaded selection.

While the debate centres on class sizes and surplus places in existing



Kindergarten pupils could be the first to benefit from the pilot voucher scheme

Photograph: Tony Buckingham

schools it will continue to miss the point. For if we are ever to meet parents' proper demands for the right sort of education for their children, then we need more schools. That means new schools of every different type and size. We need different schools in different premises run by different owners. There's only one way to fuel this expansion: by giving parents back the money the state takes from them for their child's education. That's what vouchers are all about.

But this genuine marketplace of schools will also need a new attitude from Whitehall. Civil servants who have spent their careers counting pupil numbers will have to ease off. It is no good giving parents a voucher and then saying it can only be used in the school their children already go to.

Creating a climate in which new proprietors are encouraged to open new establishments will send shock waves through the existing well-protected system. There will be no hiding place for the failing school.

The influence of the teaching unions and their ability to obstruct change will

never be the same again. The education service is the last big nationalised industry. Schools are already funded according to precise calculations of pupil numbers. They are now ready to take the next obvious step and receive their funding direct from the customer.

The transfer of funds from the

It's no good giving parents a voucher then saying it can only be used in the school their children already go to

state to the parent would be irreversible. It would benefit all parents—not just those who can afford to pay now but those for whom there is no real choice under the present arrangements.

The voucher as a symbol of parental choice will be immensely powerful. For

many parents it will be the first time they have been given any degree of control over their children's schooling.

We don't need to create a new wave of Elons and Harrows. Parents' new buying power will, if unfettered by excessive controls, unleash new types of school that we have never previously seen in this country. Schools set up specifically to meet the needs of a particular sector of the market.

The current opposition to the first phase of the nursery education voucher scheme is predictable. For the Labour party it is scarcely surprising that they should be so fearful of putting power in the hands of parents when even the modest Assisted Places Scheme attracts their venom. Meanwhile the LEA chairman, it seems, are afraid parents might not choose their schools.

Well, that is what choice is about. Trusting parents is a risky business. They might not act the way we all want them to. That's what the people who run education in our local authorities now fear.

But, if LEA schools are offering a

high-quality service that is well regarded in the community, they will have little to fear. Indeed the most successful schools always find the threat of competition invigorating.

The scheme is unnecessarily bureaucratic, some cry. Well, that teacher hasn't said the same about every new procedure. The same was said about testing, yet every poll shows this is what parents want. One of the reasons my council has been keen to be among the pioneers is to have first-hand experience of how it will work in practice. We will be able to ensure that our own schools are fully geared up for the challenge.

We have our marketing strategy in place. Equally important will be the fresh spotlight thrown on the 130 or so independent providers already active in the borough. It will be a vital test of the publicity programme announced yesterday for parents to have access to information about every possible establishment providing nursery education in their area. The voucher, in common with almost every other Conservative education reform, will eventually win the backing of all parties. Once politicians see how popular is this transfer of

power to the parent they will need no encouragement to join the bandwagon. Owning a voucher will be just as natural as owning shares in BT.

The next few months will show just how streamlined we can make the process of issuing and redeeming vouchers. But the real test is the test of nerve that is still to come.

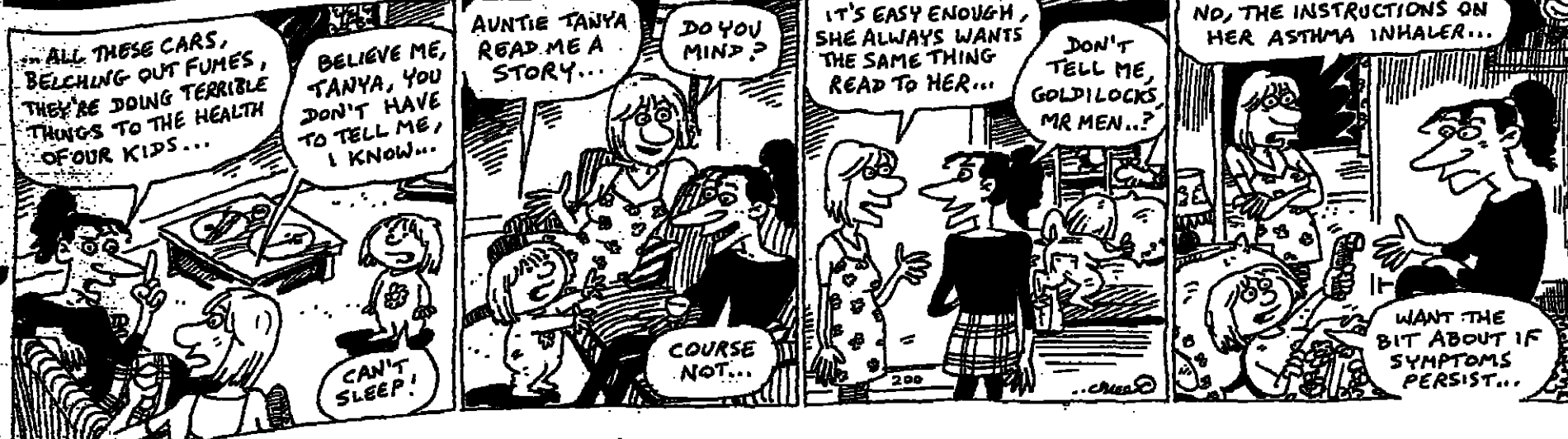
For if we stop here we will have achieved very little. We must extend the voucher entitlement throughout the school system and—crucially—we must examine the obstacles that still stand in the way of opening new schools. How easy do we want to make it for new providers to emerge? How protective will we be of existing institutions?

Vouchers on their own will not be enough to bring about the real explosion in choice that we are seeking. They will have the effect of changing forever the power relationship between parents and head teachers. But parents will be frustrated if we only provide them with half-chances.

The writer is leader of Wandsworth Council.

by Tony Reeve and Steve Way

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obituaries/gazette

Alan Bush

There was one extra-musical fact that dominated the career of Alan Bush, a fact that alienated and antagonised: his staunch and paid-up membership of the Communist Party. If the bourgeois musical world accused him of sacrificing the purity of art to ideology, then ironically enough it simultaneously refused to forget his politics when it judged his music.

But Bush himself was neither a compromiser nor a renitent. He was not a romantic socialist, like Rutland Boughton and the folk-song revivalists, but a hard-line subscriber to a rigid Marxism which put the requirements of the revolutionary proletariat at the head of the composer's responsibilities. The result, however, was not the brash and brazen populism that one might expect.

Bush was something of a *wunderkind* and in the 1920s it looked as though he might become Britain's first great international pianist - he studied with three of the most distinguished teachers of the inter-war years, Benno Moiseiwitsch, Tobias Matthay and Arthur Schnabel - but composition won out, and from six years of lessons



Bush unbending
Photograph: Camera Press

with John Ireland he learnt the sophisticated and restrained craftsmanship which marked his music from the beginning. A work of 1929 for string quartet, *Dialectic*, has a tightness and austerity of organisation remarkable for a period of English music when fulsome lyricism was the norm.

In the early Thirties he studied philosophy and musicology in Berlin, and the experience proved a turning-point. It was here that he came into close contact with Bertold Brecht

and Hanns Eisler, whose influence radicalised his political leanings: back in England he joined the Communist Party in 1935 and founded the Workers' Music Association, for which he did sterling work as a conductor. There were still contradictions. His *Symphony in C* (1939) portrayed in its three movements the bourgeoisie, the sufferings of the working class, and its final triumph, but not in an idiom calculated to appeal to the masses.

During the Second World War, Bush was ostracised, and Vaughan Williams once threatened to sever all links with the BBC unless they lifted a ban on the broadcasting of an avowed Communist's music. In the late Forties, he was an enthusiastic visitor to Stalin's Soviet Union and was deeply shaken by the infamous decree of Stalin's controller of culture, Andrei Zhdanov, in 1948 against "formalism" and "dissonance" in modern music. "Who accused you of formalism?" he was later asked. "I accused myself," he replied; a remark that speaks volumes about both his isolation in Britain and his monastic severity of temperament.

He resolved to simplify and communicate more broadly. His first opera, *Wozzeck*, which won a prize in the 1951 Festival of Britain opera competition but failed to secure a professional performance in his home country for over 20 years, contains rousing choruses as well as a generally more relaxed and accessible style of melody and harmony. As well as several attractive chamber and instrumental works, there followed a ballad on the Aldermaston marches, songs for the "Asian Struggle", as well as an opera on the trade-union martyr Joe Hill. It is significant that this music had far more exposure in East Germany than it ever found anywhere further west.

Bush was an impressive figure with a penetrating gaze and somewhat unbending manner. His sincerity and integrity could not be doubted, but the unbendingness reaches into his music, too, for all its economy and intelligence. Perhaps his masterpiece is the Violin Concerto of 1948, a work as beautiful and refined as any in the genre since Walton's. It was surely of this level of his achievement that Vaughan

Williams was thinking when he paid his candid tribute to Bush on his 50th birthday. "Alan Bush has rather fantastic notions of the nature and purpose of the Fine Arts. Luckily for us, when the inspiration comes over him, he forgets all about this and remembers only the one eternal rule for all artists, 'To thine own self be true'."

Bush, needless to say, would have demurred.

Rupert Christiansen

Alan Dudley Bush, composer, conductor, pianist: born Dulwich 22 December 1900; Professor of Composition, Royal Academy of Music 1925-78; conductor, London Labour Choral Union 1929-40; founder, Workers' Music Association 1936; President 1941-76; served Royal Army Medical Corps 1941-45; Chairman, Composers Guild of Great Britain 1947-48; author of Strict Counterpoint in the Palestrina Style 1948; In My Seventh Decade 1970; In My Eighth Decade and Other Essays 1980; married 1931 Nancy Head (died 1991); two daughters, and one daughter deceased; died Watford 31 October 1995.

Zofia Ilinska

On the evening Zofia Ilinska was born, in what was then the Polish city of Wilno, her father went to church and prayed with such intensity that he was locked in all night. Her life after that was never short of drama. She witnessed a string of episodes which might have made a lesser spirit cautious or bitter, but in her case served only to sharpen her courage, her innate sense of adventure, and the resolve to celebrate the world through her poetry.

On her mother's side, Ilinska was descended from O'Rourke who had fled Ireland in the 17th century. One branch ended up near Nowogrodek in the west of Russia and it was into this region, one of those perpetually fought-over, ethnically ambiguous pockets of eastern Europe, that Zofia Brochocka was born.

Her early years were austere. The family house had been burnt down during the Polish-Soviet war and the land around it was devoid of houses, cattle, grain, almost any food at all; Zofia's mother fed her on goat's milk while her father, Aleksander Brochocki, started to rebuild the house. They lived simply: there was never electricity, and furniture was built largely from the birch forests that surrounded the estate.

She was 17 when, in September 1939, Soviet tanks rolled into eastern Poland. With hours to spare, she, her mother (her father had died in 1934), and her two brothers escaped on farm carts. For three days they manoeuvred through the forest, keeping just ahead of the advance, and crossed the Lithuanian border with bullets splintering the side of the carts. Arriving in Britain, Zofia began to improve her English. Within a few years she had earned a degree in English literature from Reading University. She was already writing verse, but on her 21st birthday remembered throwing herself on her bed, driven to tears by the thought that Byron was already an established poet by her age. Despite this, she managed during the war to publish, in Polish, two volumes of poetry.

In 1943, while working at the Polish section of the BBC, she married Olgierd Ilinski, a pilot. Within three weeks of the wedding, his plane had been shot down over France. At 23, Zofia Ilinska was a widow. Two years later, she married Harley Moseley, an American diplomat, and they spent their honeymoon in St Mawes, on the south coast of Cornwall. So taken were they by the village that Moseley bought its two hotels.

For the next 30 years, they lived as hotel-keepers. To love her adopted home, she was happy to have found in Cornwall a landscape which acted upon her in the way that the forest and the river Niemen had done in Poland. She was unsparring in the time she gave to others, to her family, to the hundreds of people who passed through St Mawes. All who came across her felt drawn in by a rare and rewarding quality of warmth.

Perhaps it was this to her life that she gave the greater part of her art, and not to her poetry. Yet she always wrote; she wrote - in English now - about those who came to her hotels; she wrote about Cornwall; she wrote about her son who was 22 when he was killed in a car accident; she wrote a poem called "Aikichi Kuboyama" (translated into three languages) about a Japanese fisherman, the first victim of the hydrogen bomb; in water-lapping dactyls water splashes. Against the heart, against the tarnished bow, Aikichi Kuboyama died of asbes.

She wrote about her own cancer, and she translated T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* into Polish. Her work was the writing of a genuine poet; she had a meticulous regard for

technique and an unusually lyrical sense of the language, as if someone for whom English was not her native tongue.

Contented though she was in exile, Ilinska remained essentially Polish and always curious about her old home. After Yalta, the land around the Niemen had become part of the Soviet Union and all her attempts to visit it, even to receive news, had failed. But in 1992, after 53 years, she returned to the newly independent republic of Belarus. It was a harrowing journey but one that she treated with her usual open-mindedness; it was, to her, more important to answer the



Ilinska: closing the circle
Photograph: Nick Wesolowski

questions than to avoid the pain the answers would bring. She found her house destroyed, burnt down again in 1941. She failed to locate the board of silver which she had buried in the forest, but she did meet a number of people who remembered her. She also found her father's grave looted and the family chapel collapsed.

On her return to Cornwall, she started to raise money to restore the chapel, and in summer 1994 went back to Belarus for its re-opening. In her speech she explained to the villagers that the chapel was dedicated to the memory of her father, but that, as a place of worship, it was for them; she told them that her family would never return, that the world she had known there had gone forever. In restoring the chapel, she believed that she had somehow fulfilled herself: that she had, in her own words, "closed the circle".

Philip Marsden

Zofia Aleksandra Brochocka, poet: born Wilno, Poland 29 October 1921; books include *The Idle Rocks* 1972, *Horoscope of the Moon* 1992; married 1943 Olgierd Ilinski (died 1943); 1945 Harley Moseley (died 1982); one daughter, and one son deceased; died St Austell, Cornwall 30 October 1995.

Aleksander Zyw

The death of Aleksander Zyw reduces still further the surviving band of distinguished artists born in Poland who enriched British culture by their work and presence from the 1940s. Zyw was a member of the same generation as Feliks Topolski and Josef Herman, born a decade later than Henrik Gottlieb and Jankel Adler. Zyw's distinctive contribution to European art began in the 1950s in works which were meditations on nature's forms and forces.

Zyw was born in Lida (then in Poland, now in Belarus) in 1905. He studied law and art history at university in Warsaw before going on to the Academy

of Fine Arts, from 1926 to 1932. He then travelled in Europe, notably to Dalmatia, Greece and Italy, before settling in France in 1934, and establishing a studio in Paris. At this time he specialised in landscape, working both in oils and other media. In 1939 he enlisted in the Polish army in France, in which he served until the French surrender. He then escaped to Britain, and rejoined the Polish army.

Zyw was appointed as war artist to the Polish forces, a job which he carried out with considerable success. He served in Britain, went across the Atlantic, took part in the Normandy in-

vasion and reached Belgium. He worked mainly on small drawings in ink and wash, recording the everyday routines of soldiers, as well as scenes of more significant military events. A series of drawings in a similar style and technique was published in 1945, as *Edinburgh as Seen by an Artist*. Edinburgh became his main home after the end of the war until the 1960s, when he began to spend an increasing amount of time at his house and studio in Italy.

After the war Zyw married Leslie Goddard; they settled in Dean Village, in Edinburgh. He established a firm reputation as a Scottish painter, drawing on

France and Italy for inspiration, his pictures "jewelled and rich in colour and figures", so described by Douglas Hall, the Keeper of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. But his most remarkable pictures were still to come, when in the 1950s he began work in a more austere way, taking objects as points of departure for sombre and abstracted imagery; at first pebbles, clinker and olive wood, in pale colours, greys, browns, blue-greys and blue-greens. An important series of nearly 100 works was devoted to water, inspired by the River Leith, of which some were shown at the Talbot Rice Gallery in Edinburgh in "An Instant of Water" in 1975; and a series on air, painted between 1976 and 1980, was a further example of his individual interpretation of elements and natural forms.

The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, where his work is rightly well represented, honoured him in 1986 with an exhibition of which the catalogue is called *Aleksander Zyw: The Nature of Painting*.

Joseph Darracott

Aleksander Zyw, artist: born Lida, Poland 14 September 1905; married Leslie Goddard (two sons); died Castagneto Carducci, Italy 17 September 1995.

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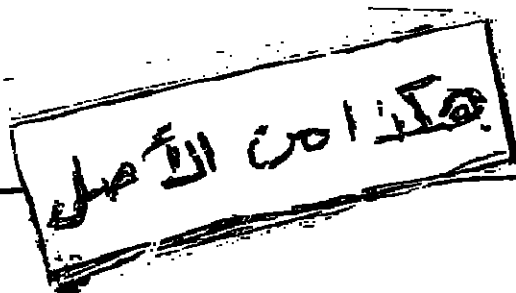
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SALES LEDGER FINANCE

COMMENT

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COMMENT

'On a number of fronts, this is a decision full of little ironies and mysteries. Until now, the Office of Fair Trading has consistently recommended that bids for electricity companies should be cleared'

North West's power pitch proves persuasive

Sir Desmond (I-speak-to-the-Prime-Minister-at-least-once-a-week) Pitcher, clearly has to be taken seriously after all. Somehow or other the chairman of North West Water has persuaded Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, to go against the advice of the new Director General of Fair Trading and allow North West's ill-judged £1.8bn bid for Norweb to go through without a reference. For the new DG, this is quite a slap in the face. Only four weeks into the job, he has had his first high-profile piece of advice rejected.

On a number of fronts, this is a decision full of little ironies and mysteries. Until now, the Office of Fair Trading has consistently recommended that bids for electricity companies should be cleared. John Bridgeman, new to the job, is entitled to his own view and wants to be seen as his own man. In any case, this is the first cross-utility bid. Even so, it is hard to see why he should turn his back on precedent – the more so because in this case, unlike the others, Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, actually swung the other way and recommended clearance.

Indeed, in the search for explanations, the Littlechild factor might seem as good as any. Sensing a popular cause, the new director-general, a little wet behind the ears, must have taken the view that the thing to do was the opposite of what the electricity regulator wanted. Seriously though, in the absence of any adequate explanation of what either

the OFT's or the Secretary of State's thinking on all this is, it is only possible to speculate.

Certainly what was being said by the Department of Trade and Industry yesterday failed to cast much light on the darkness. Barriers to entry, regulatory issues, and concern about "management efficiency" were cited as the reasons the OFT wanted a reference. But as to what any of these things meant, the OFT hid behind the usual confidentiality excuses.

The DTI was a little more obliging but not much. If anything, concern about "management efficiency" seems to be a veiled warning that Sir Desmond and his crew might not be able to cope with managing both a water and an electricity utility.

Given the high price Sir Desmond has been forced to pay to secure utility domination of the North-west, there may be something in this.

To make this deal work, North West has to push through deep, deep cost cuts. There is doubt that the joint facilities management operation foreseen, a company that will live outside the regulated structure of both industries, will be up to the job.

Even so, as mergers policy, such concern is a curious throw-back to old-fashioned concepts of public interest. In the "anything goes" mergers environment of today, the only test is meant to be competition, and even that doesn't seem to be taken too seriously judging by some recent DTI decisions.

While it is easy to understand why Mr Bridgeman should not want to be thought of as Mr Lang's (or are we still talking about Michael Heseltine here?) poodle, it is odd that someone who was chosen because he was once a businessman should find himself so out of sync with government thinking.

Stock Exchange's veil rent asunder

Tired old institutions can only fend off criticism with the claim that they are busily engaged in a grand strategy review for so long. The London Stock Exchange has been grandly reviewing for as long as most people care to remember. The promised outcome, however, slips and slides with the passing seasons, and the mutterings of discontent grow louder.

Yesterday, they broke with a roar. Rudolf Mueller, head of the Union Bank of Switzerland's operations in London, finally went public on what he has been saying privately for a long time – that the Stock Exchange has condemned itself to the increasingly diminishing role of a local trading emporium. In doing so he has done more than raise the temperature of debate over the Stock Exchange's future.

As a former member of the Stock Exchange council he has delivered a devastating blow to the already battered prestige of a once-proud, landmark institution in the

City. Now it is just proud, and that is the nub of the problem.

It is fitting, given the changing face of the City, that it should have been the representative of a powerful foreign firm who finally rent the veil of public reserve.

Mr Mueller is in fact only voicing what a great number of those with an interest in the City – Stock Exchange member firms, government officials, ministers and regulators – have been discreetly saying for ages. This is, that times have moved on, the City has been transformed, and the Stock Exchange has lamentably failed to keep up.

When the City was a gentlemen's club, and merchant bankers and stockbrokers did their business wearing Union Jack boxer shorts, the London Stock Exchange occupied a commanding position of authority and respect.

It was one of the most powerful and prestigious trade associations in the country.

But the City is no longer that British; it is the world's pre-eminent international financial centre, where big foreign firms increasingly call the tune. That is its strength, but it is one from which the exchange has failed to draw sustenance. It has become increasingly hard to make the trade association function efficiently.

Instead, the impression is of an institution that is drifting without a clear sense of purpose. The view has been reinforced by a series of unseemly rows, provoked by the Stock Exchange, with fledgling rivals such as

Tradepoint and ESI/Sharelink. The exchange's response has smacked of an abuse of regulatory power for its own ailing competitive advantage.

The most common criticism is that while the City has reinforced its position as Europe's financial capital, the London Stock Exchange has fluffed the chance to take the lead in forging an alliance of European exchanges. Instead, it saw no reason why it should share a cake it considered largely its own. The result is that it is now forced to watch helplessly as increasingly large slices of international equity business are won back by the rival continental exchanges.

Seaq International, the exchange's facility for international share dealing, flourished while places like Paris and Frankfurt languished in the dark ages. The rivals are much more efficient operations now. From 1 January, when an EU directive permits "remote" dealing on European exchanges from just one, home, base, Seaq international is likely to see a further haemorrhage of foreign business.

The blame for this paralysis should not be put on Michael Lawrence, the Stock Exchange's chief executive, or its chairman, John Kemp-Welch. By all accounts, both find it hard to move forward an organisation debilitated by in-fighting.

But to persist on this defensive, introspective course is a fatal. If it has a vision of the future, the Stock Exchange should tell us about it.

Retail turmoil: Do It All undoes the good work at the chemists while a plunge in sales triggers fighting talk from the supermarket battlefield

DIY woes send Boots into slump

NIGEL COPE

Boots highlighted the patchy nature of high street spending yesterday when it reported healthy sales growth in its Boots Chemist chain but disastrous results at its DIY businesses, which are being ravaged by the housing slump.

Boots's chairman, Sir Michael Angus, said: "The retail trading environment remains difficult and while the housing market remains depressed we should expect little good news in that area." Boots shares fell 11p to 540p on the results and analysts downgraded their full-year forecasts.

The company also made no specific announcement on its plans for its £410m cash pile. The chief executive, Lord Blyth, said the company was seeking acquisitions in Germany for its health-care business but if no suitable targets could be found it would not hesitate to return cash to shareholders. Last year Boots returned more than £500m to shareholders.

Boots the Chemists enjoyed strong trading, with like-for-like sales up by 4.5 per cent in the six months to September. The

summer heatwave boosted sales of sun creams, which were up 17 per cent. The re-launch of the No 7 brand of cosmetics in February also increased sales.

Boots confirmed its support for resale price maintenance on over-the-counter medicines in spite of the challenge by Asda and the pending Office of Fair Trading inquiry into the system. Lord Blyth said: "We believe that the removal of resale price maintenance would mean a big cut in the number of smaller, independent pharmacies."

He added that far from shying from a fight with the supermarkets Boots was well placed to cope with a price war. He pointed to the battle over perfume prices five years ago when Superdrug cut prices. Boots followed suit and increased sales by 22 per cent and also increased its market share.

Asked why Boots did not support Asda's attack on the resale price maintenance system if it stood to benefit from its abolition, he said: "You have to understand that there are some organisations that don't always behave like a predator."

Although Boots the Chemists performed strongly, lifting op-



Summer success: Boots the Chemist's sales have been lifted by sun cream demand

Photograph: Tony Buckingham

erating profits 13 per cent to £163m, the company's other retail business remain under pressure.

Boots's share of losses at Do It All, the DIY joint venture with WH Smith, increased from £1.8m to £4.8m. Like-for-like sales also fell 4.5 per cent. The

company is still closing stores but struggling to find buyers for its unwanted sites.

The high street decorating chains, F&S and HomeStyle, performed even worse, with like-for-like sales slumping more than 13 per cent and losses trebling to £7.6m.

Boots plans to increase investment in its health-care business by 50 per cent in the second half of the year. This forced analysts to downgrade their full-year profits forecast by around £20m to £495m.

Group pre-tax profits for the six months to September fell

from £290m last year to £228 this time. The fall was largely due to the sale of Boots Pharmaceuticals to BASF of Germany last year for almost £1bn. The company said the final settlement was subject to arbitration.

Investment Column, page 26

Sales plummet at Kwik Save

TOM STEVENSON
Deputy City Editor

Kwik Save disappointed the market with a sharp fall in like-for-like sales yesterday and vowed to take the fight to the grocery superstores if the feared supermarket price war escalated. Battling talk from Graeme Bowler, the chief executive, wiped 69p from Kwik Save's share price, which closed at 609p, dragging the rest of the food retail sector lower – Sainsbury fell 12p to 391p and Argill slipped 11p to 301p.

Mr Bowler said it was too early to say how long a recent resurgence in the supermarket price-cutting war would last. "We have got to see what happens through Christmas. We are in a very important trading period right now and this sort of activity is not unusual pre such a big spending period."

His comments accompanied a 7.4 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £125.5m in the year to July. The outcome was worse than expectations and prompted analysts to downgrade forecasts for this year and next. NatWest Securities, which had been expecting £140m this year, has now pencilled in £128.5m. Next year's £160m estimate has been reined in to £145m.

The profits fall was the first for Kwik Save, confirming the severity of problems on the high street, where the compa-

ny is squeezed between the superstores, which are increasingly competing on price rather than range, and new entrants at the bottom, like Aldi and Netto.

One analyst said Mr Bowler was moving Kwik Save into the same position that Asda had taken up over the price war among the supermarkets. "He is saying that he will undercut any of the supermarkets, and he will probably win but there are such things as Pyrrhic victories."

Mr Bowler admitted that 350 of Kwik Save's smaller stores, more than a third of the 979-strong portfolio, were performing badly. Capital expenditure doubled in the year to £200m, partly to fund a refurbishment programme for the problem shops, which Mr Bowler said had already reversed the sales fall in the redesigned outlets.

Although overall sales increased by 7 per cent to £3.2bn, most of the improvement came from new openings and the acquisition last year of Shoprite. Volumes were 3.4 per cent down and price inflation ran at just 0.8 per cent over the year.

Profits were hit by a £6m loss from the acquired Shoprite stores, the cost of closing down two distribution centres and other one-off property costs. Although earnings per share fell 10 per cent to \$1.7m, the dividend rose 4 per cent to 20p.

Investment Column, page 26

£50m lost in bonds' bear market

NIC CIGUITI

The City's top ten gilt-edged market makers collectively lost a total of more than £50m during the bear market for bonds in 1994, it emerged yesterday.

Several of the City's biggest names, including BZW, Goldman Sachs and SBC Warburg, were among the biggest losers. They lost almost £60m.

The only big gainers were Lehman Brothers (£16.6m) and Salomon Brothers (£5.6m).

The market makers' heavy losses, caused by the US decision to raise interest rates in February last year, followed substantial profits for most in 1993.

The extent of the losses came as Angela Knight, the Treasury Minister, told a conference of gilt

market specialists that Government reforms would now make gilts even more attractive for domestic and overseas investors.

Gilt-edged market makers' problems were cruelly exposed by the Federal Reserve's sudden decision last year because many held long positions on bonds. Hopes of a recovery were dashed after bond and gilt prices refused to rally throughout 1994.

Among the losers in the year to the end of December was BZW, which turned a £28.1m profit the previous year into a £19.2m loss. BZW's woes were made worse by its exposure to sterling gilts from Confederation Life, the Canadian insurer that collapsed in August.

Goldman Sachs managed to turn a loss of £6.1m in the year

to December 1993 into a loss of £34.6m the following year. The company yesterday confirmed the figures but declined to comment about them.

SBC Warburg also revealed a loss of £6.3m in the year to December 1994, compared to a smaller loss of £3.4m in the previous 12 months. Kieran Lynch, head of gilt trading, said the company's year-end period meant that losses in 1994 appeared in both year's accounts. The picture would have been different for the calendar year of 1993, he added.

A number of market makers who declined to be named, claimed that it was difficult to compare company accounts because each one was prepared in a slightly different way.

Some included elements in

them other than gilt dealing.

Philip Howard, managing director of Lehman Brothers, which saw a £16.6m profit in the year to November 1994, said: "Our market share was going up and we were getting a better feel of the business than before. We also made a particular effort to understand the international business outside the UK. Finally, the traders had a very good call on the market and were able to keep their position looking the right way for much of the year."

At the conference yesterday, organised by NatWest Gilts, Mrs Knight said: "We have set about a major overhaul of the way that Government debt is managed. It will make things more attractive for investors without tying up the authorities in red tape."

Trading scandal: Official Japanese displeasure casts doubt over bank's future Daiwa likely to lose independence

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Tokyo

Seven weeks after owning up to trading losses of \$1.1bn, Daiwa Bank looks increasingly isolated from the Japanese financial establishment, amid rumours that its days as an independent bank may be numbered.

The bank this week submitted detailed reports to both the US Federal Reserve and Japan's Ministry of Finance, justifying the two-month delay between learning of the losses at its New York branch and informing the American banking authorities.

It denied a cover up, and said that the extraordinary gap was necessary to investigate fully the debacle that resulted from 30,000 illegal trades conducted over 11 years. The report to the

US Reserve admitted ordering the trader, Toshihide Iguchi, to continue the illicit trades, but claimed that this was to prevent him from "escaping".

An "improvement plan", including proposals to improve the bank's internal inspection systems, was publicly rejected by the Ministry of Finance, an indication of its anger at Daiwa's handling of the affair. The ministry's elite bureaucrats have been humiliated, after admitting that they knew of the staggering losses six weeks before they were made public.

After a wretched year, in which a handful of credit unions and smaller banks have gone under, the Daiwa affair has further undermined confidence in the banking system, leading to an increase in the so-called "Japan premium", an addi-

tional lending charge on loans to Japanese banks.

The Finance Minister, Masayoshi Takemura, last month made a contrite phone call to Robert Rubin, Secretary to the US Treasury, and a senior official has been dispatched to New York to "explain" the irregularities. The ministry's recent position appears to be an attempt to reassert its flagging authority, and to punish Daiwa for dragging it through the mud.

Earlier in the week, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, which oversees Japan's immense postal savings system, announced that it was reducing its investments with Daiwa by 10 per cent, with further reductions a possibility.

Last week the country's biggest pension fund manager

froze new investments with the bank, an ominous sign given Daiwa's status as leader among Japanese banks in the pensions business. The Ministry of Finance exerts huge behind-the-scenes influence on such institutions: it is unlikely that such decisions could have been made without its knowledge and approval.

In such an atmosphere, Daiwa's long-term prospects are in question, and speculation is rife about a possible merger. Among the rumoured candidates are the Industrial Bank of Japan, Nomura Securities, and Fuji Bank.

In banking circles, Fuji is considered a particularly plausible possibility since it lacks a large number of branches in the Osaka area where Daiwa has its headquarters and power base.

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THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Rich Boots prepared for a scrap

Asda's price-cutting antics in the medicines market have created a cloud over Boots' share price. Having enjoyed a good run early in the year they have slumped by almost 10 per cent since Archie Norman started to portray himself as Medicine Man.

But it is an over-reaction to suggest that Boots would struggle if resale price maintenance collapsed and the supermarkets sparked a price war.

Boots is well placed whether RPM stays or goes. Just as the Net Book Agreement suited WH Smith, the price maintenance on non-prescription drugs is very convenient for Boots. It is quite happy to cream off chunky margins on maintained prices. But as the largest pharmacy chain, with 1,200 of the UK's 12,000 pharmacies, it could use its marketing and buying muscle to cut prices and grow market share if a price war broke out. It would be the smaller, independent pharmacies that felt the pain.

Boots has already proved it can scrap with the best of them after its run-in with Superdrug over discounted perfumes a few years ago. The group's real problems are the weak housing market, which is crippling its DIY businesses, and the burning question of what to do with its £400m cash pile.

Boots must be thankful that the chemist chain is motoring nicely. Of the group's £196m operating profits in the six months to September, Boots the Chemist accounted for £164m.

Like-for-like sales were up 4.5 per cent, a laudable performance given high street gloom.

Sales of sun creams were boosted by the summer heatwave and the No 7 brand of cosmetics performed strongly after a February re-launch.

Elsewhere, it was a pretty sorry tale. Losses at the Do It All joint venture with WH Smith almost tripled to £4.6m. Losses also tripled at the AG Stanley business, which includes the Fades and Homestyle high street stores. Like-for-like sales fell 4.5 per cent at Do It All and by a whopping 13 per cent at AG Stanley. Like-for-like sales at Halfords are flat and down slightly at Children's World. Not very cheerful.

Given Boots' Ward White experience, which saddled it with many of its current turkeys, it seems unlikely that the group will countenance a retail acquisition with its cash. The two most likely possibilities remain a deal to bolt on to Boots Healthcare International, or a second share buy-back.

Analysts were downgrading forecasts yesterday but this was due to investment plans at Boots Healthcare International. Boots plans to increase investment in its Healthcare business

by 50 per cent in the second half. NatWest Securities is forecasting profits of £495m for the full year, which puts the shares, down 11p to 540p yesterday, on a forward rating of almost 16. Unexciting but fair.

Kwik Save runs to stand still

There is a nice irony in the market slashing 10 per cent from the market value of Kwik Save yesterday, a 69p fall to 609p – an everyday low price for a company whose 979 stores are selling a litre of bleach for a ludicrous giveaway 7p. The loo cleaner is plainly a bargain – whether the shares are such good value is less clear.

Graeme Bowler, Kwik Save's ebullient Australian chief executive, found plenty of excuses for the disappointing performance in the year to August, but they don't make Kwik Save's future any clearer.

It is still squeezed between the supermarkets gearing up for another price war on the one hand and the continental discounters on the other.

Although sales were up 7 per cent to £3.2bn in the 12 months, the

important like-for-like figure slipped 3 per cent as lower volumes were only slightly offset by price inflation. Most of the increased turnover came from new stores – 128 were added in the period – and the addition of Shoprite.

The Scottish discounter, however, contributed a negative £6m to pre-tax profits of £125.5m, a 7 per cent decline, while earnings suffered even more, down 10 per cent to 51.7p.

The 4 per cent rise in the dividend to 20p, although well covered, appeared to be justified as much by reaching a nice round figure as anything more tangible.

Kwik Save is having to run extremely fast just to stand still. Capital expenditure doubled during the year to £200m, partly to fund what looks like a rather desperate rearguard action to start up 350 underperforming smaller stores.

The problem outlets, which were suffering a 6 per cent like-for-like sales decline, have been turned around to a 7 per cent increase but the cost in hard cash, downtime of about two weeks per refurb and management effort has been heavy.

Analysts were busy with their red pens yesterday and NatWest Securities now expects flat profits of £128.5m this year and £140m next time. At that

level the shares stand on a prospective price/earnings ratio of barely 10, a sizeable discount to the rest of the market. Cheap, but given the uncertainty, not necessarily cheerful.

Shell facing chemicals glitch

The oil giant Shell has looked less sure of itself of late. Since the radical management shake-up and cost-cutting programme initiated by BP in mid-1992, its shares have been left in the shade compared with its arch-rival's.

Shell's own cost reductions have had less effect on the bottom line, so recent profits performance has been heavily dependent on the worldwide recovery in the chemicals business which started last year.

There are now worrying signs that could be slowing.

Yesterday's nine-month results continued to reflect the dowry of soaring chemicals earnings, which slipped in £769m of the £1.18bn increase in group net earnings to £3.61bn. But the third-quarter figures told a different story. Although chemicals earnings doubled to £317m over the same period of last year, they were well down on the £396m achieved in the second three months of 1995, suggesting at the very least a hiccup in the upward trend.

All the damage came outside the US, where earnings slid 29 per cent on the back of weaker demand and thinner margins.

Shell warns that the weaker chemicals market is likely to continue into 1996, but believes the current glitch does not herald a cyclical downturn. That prediction is dependent on increased output from previously shut-down plants and hence world growth continuing to be strong.

The story is similar in refining and marketing, where earnings bounced back, rising 13 per cent over 1994 to £513m, despite a difficult market. But continuing chronic over-supply in Europe and looming capacity increases in the Far East do not bode well for next year. Upstream exploration and production earnings, down just 2 per cent to £344m, held up well before a £32m charge for the sale of some Colombian assets.

Full-year earnings of £4.75bn would put Shell's shares, down 16.5p to 729p, on a prospective multiple of nearly 14. With a forward yield of 5.2 per cent they are worth holding, but BP may continue to prove more exciting.

Simon Pincombe CITY DIARY

Government opens gates for a Railtrack windfall

The hidden element of the rail privatisation equation can at last be revealed. The Government has quietly raised the fines for leaving the gates open on pre-1845 level crossings – from £5 to £1,000.

Given that there are 400 pieces of this railway heritage still littered around the country, the substantial hike in penalties (which was pushed through Parliament in the past couple of weeks) could result in a significant windfall for Railtrack, the soon-to-be floated track operator. If all the crossing gates are left open only once a year it will mean £400,000 extra revenue if the offenders are caught.

The move is unlikely to be greeted with much enthusiasm by farmers, country folk and the Ramblers Association, who will shortly find themselves funding much-needed investment in tracks and signalling.

Further haemorrhaging from Greig Middleton, Britain's leading private client broker is selling its Channel Islands operation to Collins Stewart following reports of an imminent mutiny.

A total of 33 staff, including seven brokers, were about to jump ship from the Channel Island and Isle of Man offices, citing Greig's unwillingness to fund corporate work as the last straw.

Collins Stewart, a London-based broker, is backed by Singer & Friedlander.

While it might sound parochial this will prove extremely awkward for Greig. The offshore patch is a highly lucrative one with a huge client base. It also fol-

The harsh line adopted by the National Lottery operator on illegal overseas players may need some rethinking. You will recall that Camelot has pledged to withhold prize money if winners are found to be non-UK residents. Indeed, so popular is the UK lottery in Thailand (their own lottery pays out a measly £6,500 or so) that organised syndicates are charging up to five times the price of a £1 weekly ticket. The money is paid in advance and front men buy the tickets at high street stores in London.

However, senior bankers are privately urging caution. The demand for sterling in Thailand is now a factor supporting the pound. One for Kenneth Clarke to ponder.



Fine for some: £1,000 penalties await the forgetful

lows the defection of 11 staff from the firm's Birmingham office last month.

Circumstantial evidence indicates that the cost-cutting at Royal Insurance may have gone a touch too far. Richard Gamble, the urban chief executive, has taken to saving newspaper discount vouchers. Dining in the City the other night he surprised guests by pulling out a snappy little wallet containing a series of Financial Times vouchers. Presumably the Royal no longer runs to the 65p cover price.

This is not the first time that Mr Gamble has demonstrated the frugal side of his nature. The proud possessor of a Morgan sports car, he once admitted that it rarely left the garage on the grounds that he could not get it insured.

Something to do with a failed MoT.

First Leisure, the disco operator, is unimpressed with Lord Alexander of Weedon, the National Westminster Bank chairman who also leads the House of Lords Deregulation Committee. John Conlan, First Leisure's chief executive, complains that the committee's decision not to consider a fast-track repeal of the 1780 Sunday Observance Act – which imposes strict drinking and dancing laws – is a bit rich given NatWest's plans to operate Sunday banking. "My lord speaketh with forked tongue," snapped Mr Conlan.

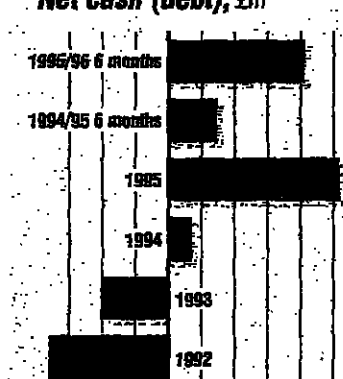
The committee is unruffled. "Perhaps Lord Alexander feels that the cash machines will make less noise than discos," retorts a committee spokesman.

Boots: at a glance

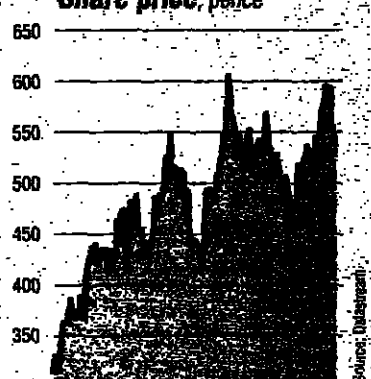
Market value: £5.2bn, share price 540p

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1994/95	1995/96
Turnover (£bn)	2.7	3.0	4.2	4.3	2.04	1.94
Pre-tax profits (£m)	341	404	416	948.7	289.7	227.9
Earnings per share (pence)	23.0	28.9	27.7	65.7	20.2	15.6
Dividends per share (pence)	12.4	13.4	15.0	17.0	5.35	5.7

Net cash (debt), £m



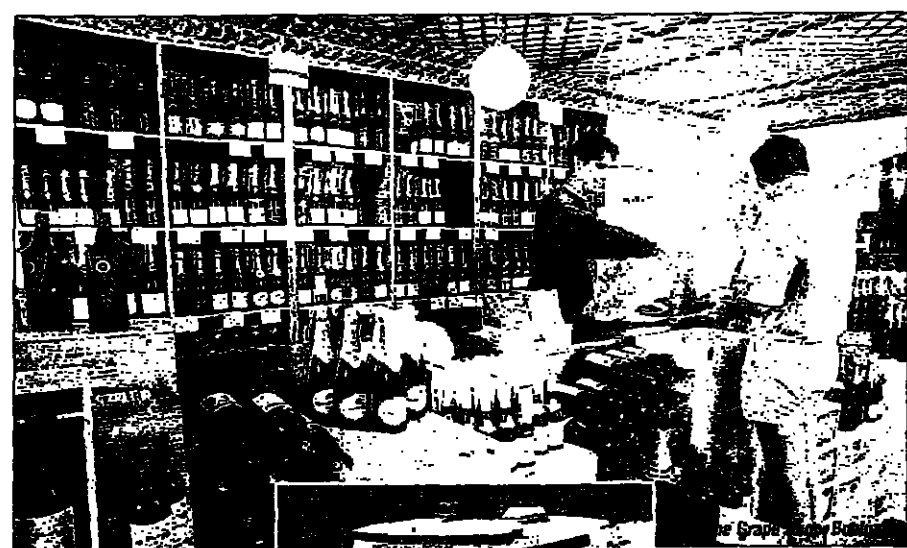
Share price, pence



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INDEPENDENT



TAKE a day trip to France and you can stock up for Christmas in style and comfort. Our bargain break is with Hoverspeed and allows a car and up to five passengers to travel from Folkestone to Boulogne for £25 inclusive. For travel on Saturdays there is a £10 supplement and though Boulogne is the main destination there is a limited availability for Calais.

Your crossing will be aboard the high-speed SeaCat, a luxurious craft that offers a huge range of duty-free savings on festive goods. Offers exclusive to Independent readers include a free Chivas Regal hip flask with every purchase of a bottle of Chivas Regal for £17; a free Pimper Heidecock Cool Bag with every £25 twin pack and a free gold-embossed champagne stopper with every bottle of Krug, priced at £49.55.

Boulogne abounds with dozens of fine food and wine out-

lets, including the finest cheesemongers outside Paris. A must, however, is The Grape Shop. This excellent wine merchant.

voted best Cross-Channel Outlet 1995, is offering Independent readers a free bottle of House Champagne when they spend £40 or more.

To book your day trip you must collect four differently numbered tokens from the seven we will be printing in the Independent and the Independent on Sunday. We are printing Token 6 today and the booking form will appear in tomorrow's edition of the Independent.

For those who wish to travel simply as foot-passengers, the day trip may be booked for £1 per person. To qualify for the £1 offer, each foot-passenger must collect four tokens. Complimentary tea and coffee will be served to car passengers travelling to Boulogne. The offer is subject to availability.

Terms and conditions

- The day trip can be taken 16 November-20 December 1995. To participate you must complete a booking form (to be published on 1 and 4 November 1995) and send it to the address on the form with 4 differently numbered tokens. All booking forms must be returned by 16 November 1995. Minimum postal booking notice is 14 days. Latecomers will endeavour to dispatch tickets at least 10 days prior to departure.
- If you wish to travel between 2 November-15 November 1995, then Hoverspeed will take credit card bookings, please call 01304 240241. The reservation office is open Mon-Fri 9am-7.30pm, Sat 9am-5.30pm. Bookings will only be accepted for those wishing to take vehicles for travel 2-15 November 1995. Please remember to take your 4 differently numbered tokens with you on your day of travel (to be presented at vehicle check-in).
- All bookings are subject to availability and terms of trading and booking.
- If you are unable to confirm your booking at your crossing a cancelled or no-show will be charged £10.
- No other refunds will be made for any other reasons.
- All alterations are subject to a £10 amendment fee.
- Maximum of 5 people per car – no trailers, caravans, minibuses or travel vans are allowed within the terms of this offer.
- Travel must take place as indicated on the tickets.
- Valid passports/visas are required.
- Careless by sea is subject to terms and conditions of the carrier copies of which are available on request.
- French Bank holidays are 1 and 11 November 1995. Supermarkets in France will be open on Sundays from 10 December 1995.
- If a car can not be allocated to Boulogne, it will be allocated to Calais. Calais to Boulogne is a 20 minute drive.
- The offer is only valid for day trips, return tickets will be validated on outward crossing.
- Photocopies of tokens are not valid.
- For enquiries on the day trip offer call, 01304 240176, Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm. No telephone bookings will be accepted on this number.



Leisure group gets Snowdome

JOHN SHEPHERD

The diversified First Leisure group has added another string to its bow by buying the Snowdome, Europe's first large real-snow indoor ski-slope at Tamworth near Birmingham.

John Conlan, chief executive, said the company planned to build larger versions of the Snowdome, and had, in effect, blocked the path for competitors by buying the UK and Irish rights to the secret snow-producing and refrigeration process developed in Australia.

The Snowdome, which is profitable, has a 150m slope with a snow depth of 16cm. Talks are being held with an unnamed (our operator to offer holiday-makers an all-in package of learning to ski in the UK before taking to the slopes in Europe.

This acquisition fits into First Leisure strategy of concentrating on mass market, and low-price leisure operations – other interests include ten-pin bowling, discos, bingo, amusement arcades, and health and fitness clubs. The typical cost for using the dome is £10 to £14 for a two-hour session. Customers can also

learn to snowboard. First Leisure is not disclosing the price of the acquisition. Analysts said, however, that the company would have had to pay at least £6m. News of the deal accompanied a trading update, which generally showed the leisure market is still price-sensitive and the pace of the climb out of recession remains slow.

Despite that confirmation, analysts were encouraged and underscored forecasts of a rise in taxable profits from £36m to £39m for the latest financial year, which ended on Tuesday.

Attendances are continuing to increase in several businesses, although the hot summer impacted adversely at operations in Blackpool – the company's main resort area. "We don't make money from people digging holes in the sand," Mr Conlan said. Spending on the lottery is still affecting bingo clubs.

The growth in attendances is still not quick enough to give the company confidence to raise prices by anything more than inflation. There are signs, however, that consumers are willing to spend more on drinks and food when they go out.

Bardon sells marine division for £72.3m

NIC CICUTTI

Bardon Group, the quarrying and aggregates group, has sold its marine aggregates unit, Civil and Marine, to ARC Marine, a subsidiary of Hanson, for £72.3m.

Bardon, which admitted yesterday that it was facing difficult trading conditions in the UK, said the sale left the company with a "sound financial structure." Peter Tom, chief executive, said: "With a more robust balance sheet we will have much more flexibility in developing our four mainstream businesses, all of which have strong positions in their respective markets." Gearing is expected to fall to 45 per cent.

Civil and Marine Holdings made an operating profit of £5.5m in 1994 and had net assets of £65.9m.

The acquisition, subject to Bardon shareholder approval, will consolidate ARC's position as Europe's leading producer of sea-dredged sand and gravel.

David Snowdon, chairman of ARC, said: "This important move increases our presence in Europe, where we trade at 12 ports, and gives us a firm footing in the important Thames market."

C&M has a major presence in the London area, where we expect further growth.

Since 1990, supplies of marine aggregates to mainland Europe have increased substantially. This acquisition complements our existing business."

Derek Bonham, Hanson's chief executive, added: "This acquisition fits well into our strategy of building up our business by bolt-on acquisition and investment."

COMPANIES IN BRIEF

Dresdner profits rise

Dresdner, the German bank that bought Kleinwort Benson earlier this year, announced a 13.6 per cent increase in operating profits after risk provision in the first nine months of the year. Dresdner enjoyed the rise to DM1.5bn (£682m) thanks to a rebound in trading profits and a 45 per cent lowering of risk provisions. Own-account trading rose to DM36m in the first nine months compared with a DM15m loss previously. Dresdner said that it will split responsibility for its global investment banking business, with Kleinwort taking control of non-German equities and the international advisory business. Dresdner will keep control of fixed income, forex and derivatives business.

Azian seeks cash for acquisition

Computer services group Azian is to raise £20.4m in an open offer underwritten by SBC Warburg to finance the acquisition of Ronin, a network computing distributor, for £6.95m. It also announced interim pre-tax profits of £4.4m, four times the £1.1m achieved in the comparable half year, and said it had had a strong start to the second half of the year. Earnings per share were 13.6p (3.7p) and the dividend increased 20 per cent to 1.2p.

Bellway faces housing difficulties

Housebuilder Bellway warned that conditions since the beginning of the current financial year had remained difficult but an increase in the number of developments meant private house sales were up on the same period last year. Planning delays were having an adverse effect on return on capital and with the challenging market conditions was putting pressure on margins. Pre-tax profits in the year to July were £3.4m (£28m), struck from sales of £267m (£201m). Earnings per share were 21.4p (17.3p).

BP provides for US environment

BP's third-quarter results next week will include an exceptional charge of \$385m (£244m) in respect of the sale of its refining and marketing interest in the north-eastern US to the Tosco Corporation. Half of the total is to provide for potential environmental liabilities. BP expects proceeds of \$235m for the assets and crude inventories.

ICI's China expansion

ICI has announced two new plants in Shanghai at a total cost of about \$440m (£379m). ICI Polyurethanes is setting up a joint venture with a local company to establish a "world scale" factory to supply MDI, used in the refrigeration, building insulation, footwear and furniture industries. The investment will be around \$400m, with the rest of the total accounted for by a second Chinese operation for ICI Paints. The new site will be in the Songjiang industrial zone in Shanghai in a joint development with Swire Pacific.

RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Asda (Q)	72.7m (£37.7m)	4.4m (1.1m)	13.8p (5.7p)	1.2p (1p)
Bellway (FY)	267m (£201m)	3.4m (£28m)	21.4p (17.3p)	7.7p (7p)
Banks (Q)	1.84m (£1.04m)	220m (£200m)	15.5p (£20.3p)	5.7p (£3.35p)
Cable International (Q)	1.72m (£1.30m)	-2.9m (£-2.2m)	-4.11p (£-3.7p)	nil (nil)
Fraser & Neave (FY)	87.8m (£81.7m)	4.0m (£3.3m)	3p (£2.9p)	2.7p (£2.5p)
Essex Partners (FY)	25.8m (£17.7m)	1.04m (£1.41m)	5.86p (£8.05p)	4.3p (£4.3p)
Gerard & Holland (Q)	51.2m (£47m)	12.1m (£11.1m)	15.8p (£14.4p)	8p (£8p)
Interborough (FY)	6.51m (£7.7m)	0.40m (£1.41m)	5.17p (£4.8p)	7.8p (£7.8p)
Bank Sava (FY)	3.23m (£1.02m)	120m (£138m)	51.88p (£7.28p)	20p (£19.25p)
Hayes Ditch/Snell (Q3)	23.8m (£1.6m)	1.12m (£1.05m)	11.8p (£8.8p)	-
J Smart Contractors (FY)	17.64m (£17.16m)	3.41m (£1.65m)	23.14p (£10.02p)	9p (£8.5p)
Westminster Securities (Q)	1.55m (£2.47m)	-0.82m (£-0.95m)	-0.7p (£-0.2p)	nil (nil)

(F) - Full (Q) - Interim (M) - Nine months

market report/shares

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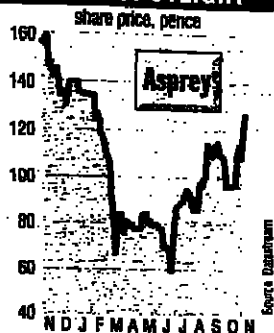
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26,884 bargains

Gifts Index
94.04 +0.35

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Supermarket chains have reached their sell-by date

TAKING STOCK

The high riding supermarket chains have reached their sell-by date. The investment rush to the checkouts gathered pace yesterday, leaving the shares of the industry leaders dejected and demoralised.

The interim figures from J Sainsbury are responsible for the ragged retreat. They demonstrated that the supermarket groups are coming under increasing pressure and the shares no longer deserved their glamour rating.

Sainsbury was a "rude awakening" for many in the market, said one broker.

The four supermarket leaders represented approaching a sixth of stock market volume with Asda alone responsible for a remarkable 37.9 million turnover. Tesco commanded approaching 19 million, Asprey more than 17 million, Sainsbury 9.5 million. The cut-price shares struggled to get support. Asda fell 4.25p to 95.5p (after

94p) and Asprey lost 11p to 301p after hitting 292p. Tesco lost 7p to 286p and Sainsbury went to 391p, off 12p, representing a two day fall of 33p.

The results from Kwik Save failed to spray around any confidence, leaving the discounters' shares limping 68p lower at 610p. Boots, off 11p to 540p, added to the retail gloom while Marks & Spencer, apparently suffering from Barclays de Zoete Wedd caution, lost 10p to 407p.

The supermarket carnage clipped more than 3.5 points from the FT-SE 100 index which, inspired by New York, managed to improve 4.3 to 3,523.

But as most retailers wilted, Asprey, the jeweller, sparked to 127p, up 19p. Stories flowed that bid action was imminent with a Far Eastern buyer preparing to strike. A market agreement buy-out was also mooted. The shares have col-



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

lapsed from 375p as the jeweller plunged into losses but the group, also embracing Garrards and Mappin & Webb, appointed Ian Dahl, ex Marks & Spencer, as chief executive in August.

Essex Furniture failed to resist the retail retreat, falling 3p to 102p with profits down from £1.4m to £1.04m. The company is currently completing an 18 month accounting period. There are hopes profits could top £3m in the next full year. Kingsfisher was also in form as it completed its US investment presentations to 15 institutions. The shares rose 2p to 480p with a modest profit £10m upgrade to £325m for

next year by Charterhouse. Tilney helping sentiment. Sources close to the group rejected suggestions it planned to merge into furniture retailing. Albright & Wilson, the chemical group, fell 6p to 154p, only 4p above February's scaled down flotation price. There is talk of profit downgrades in the air. Fears of trading gloom at David S Smith, the packaging group, lowered the shares 16p to 564p.

Sotheby, the auctioneer, rose 40p to 920p as a million buy back of 400,000 shares was announced. Rolls-Royce, the aero engine group which has been finding the altitude too rich,

managed a 1p gain to 153p. The group is apparently engaged in a series of investment meetings, hoping to nullify a bearish stockbroker report which has pulled the shares back from above 190p.

TSB put on 5p to 381p on continuing speculation about a counter bid to the Lloyd's Bank deal. Forte rose 6p to 255p as an institution picked up shares at 253p.

Lombard was unchanged at 154.5p as Dutton-Forsyth, the group's main car dealership, was said to be the next disposal target of crusading chief executive Dieter Bock. Evans Halshaw, the garage group, reversed a further 20p to 298p with Ryland off 5p at 79p.

Telapac, the electronic group, jumped 110p to 1,045p, a 300,000 share trade by CIBC in Lyonsville Lane at 1,000p caused the excitement. Bepole Technology rose 6p to 80p on talk a significant contract will

accompany the announcement of the forthcoming figures. United News gained 15p more to 532p as the departure of Sir Nicholas Lloyd as editor of the Daily Express heightened talk the newspapers will be sold.

Whitehall clearance of North West Water's £1.8m swoop on Norweb was announced as the market closed. NNW firmed 2p to 997p and Norweb was up 30p at 1,185p.

On the lively insurance pitch GRE, helped along by an analyst meeting and talk of a German strike, gained 9p to 240p. In oils Shell, off 17p at 729p, reflected a cautious trading statement.

Corities International gained another 2p to 120p. After a £2.5m loss this year, Greif's bid to acquire and expand the data side, possibly through acquisitions. The company is unpaired and Stordata should make profits of at least £1.5m this year.

Shares of Queensborough Holdings, the aspiring leisure group run by Kevin Leech, the chairman of ML Laboratories, are expected to be suspended today. The group has agreed a takeover which will be partly financed by a £12.5m rights issue. Mr Leech is taking up his entitlement and hopes to lift his stake to 29.9 per cent. Queensborough, unchanged at 1.25p on the USM, is expected to return as a fully-listed company.

Stordata Solutions, the computer data group pumped into the old Millgate car alarm business, firmed to 17.5p. The new management is expected to revitalise the car alarm operation and expand the data side, possibly through acquisitions. The company is unpaired and Stordata should make profits of at least £1.5m this year.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: * For rights & dividends see Ex-Int & Unlisted Securities Market a Suspended or Partly Paid (pp) or Not Paid (np). Source: Reuters.

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seag. Simply dial 090 123 555 followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 090 1235 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FT-SE 100 - Real-time	00	Starting Rates	04	Pre-emption Issues	39
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UK Company News	02	Wall St Market	06	Electricity Shares	41
Foreign Exchange	03	Tokyo Market	07	High Street Banks	40

Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of the Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0901 123 555. For assistance, call our helpline 071 673 4375 (9.30am - 5.30pm). Calls cost 30p per minute (cheaper rates), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include VAT.

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
ASDA Group	370,000	Rolls-Royce	100,000	Harzon	70,000	Starbuck	60,000
Wool	300,000	Marks & Spencer	70,000	REXAM	70,000	Fors	50,000
Asprey	170,000	Essex Furniture	70,000	Stale	70,000	Light Bank	50,000
BT	140,000	Essex	60,000	Barney	70,000	S&P Chart	40,000
BT	140,000	Essex	60,000	Cable & Wire	60,000	S&P Chart	40,000

FT-SE 100 index hour by hour

Open 3520.0 up 14	11.00 3524.0 up 54	14.00 3524.0 down 03
High 3525.0 up 16	12.00 3524.0 up 06	15.00 3523.0 down 34
Low 3523.0 up 16	13.00 3523.0 up 01	16.00 3523.0 up 43

ASK YOUR CURRENT ACCOUNT AN AWKWARD QUESTION

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FREE Answering Machine
Offer ends 17 November 1995

Find out more today, call FREE on:
0500 95 95 95

Applications and overdrafts are subject to status, written quotations available on request. Credit interest is payable net of basic rate income tax, 5% gross p.a. paid on credit balances of £5000 or over. Minimum age 18. Minimum credit history of £200 per month. Alliance & Leicester Building Society.

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Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	95.5	-4.25	Rolls-Royce	102	-3	Harzon	700	-	Starbuck	600	-
Wool	300	-	Marks & Spencer	391	-12	REXAM	700	-	Fors	500	-
Asprey	301	-11	Essex Furniture	102	-3	Stale	700	-	Light Bank	500	-
BT	140	-	Essex	60	-	Barney	700	-	S&P Chart	400	-
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هكذا امن الاصل

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES	
UNITED STATES	DOLLAR

[illegible]

TOURIST RATES	
2 Days	3 Days

INTEREST RATES

UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	6.75	Discount	3.50	Prime	8.75	Discount	0.50
Swiss		Lombard	5.50	Discount	5.25	Belgium	
Information	5.00	Canada		Real Funds	5.75	Discount	3.50
Italy		Prime	6.75	Spain		Central	4.00
Discount	9.00	10-Day Repo	9.25	Sweden		Switzerland	
Real Funds		Denmark		Sweden		Discount	2.00
Advantage	3.70	Discount	5.00	Repo (Ave)	8.91	Lombard	4.00

Country	5yr	yield %	1
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Source: HSBC Markets Research		*Yields calculated on Local basis		*Denotes zero coupon		
MONEY MARKET RATES						
	OT Night	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	6 7/8	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
Shanghai CNY's			6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
Local Agency Deposit			6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
Discount Market Data			6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
Treasury Bill (Day)	7 1/8	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
Treasury Bill (Year)			6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4
Other CNY			6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4

LIFE FINANCIAL FUT

LIFFE FT-SE INDEX OPTION					
Settlement price: 3522.1		clearing offer price			Call/Put
	3450	3500	3550	3600	Total/void
December	90 / 14	52 / 08	26 / 53	10 / 90	..
November	125 / 39	92 / 57	62 / 79	40 / 109	..
January	151 / 96	121 / 76	92 / 99	70 / 128	..
February	172 / 87	142 / 88	132 / 108	90 / 137	..

COMMODITIES

Cocoa	Coffee	Peanuts	Barley	
LCE \$/tonne	LCE \$/tonne	LCE \$/tonne	LCE \$/tonne	10 - 02 47 30
Dec 822	Nov 2318	Nov 175 00	Nov 117.00	Kangaroo 373-86 236-44
Mar 850	Dec 2229	Dec 291 50	Mar 117.00	Sows 89-95 56-80
May 969	Mar 2223	Mar 290 50	Mar 119 00	Hobbs 334-97 243-51
Oct 2,295	Oct 2,229	Oct 98	Oct 184	
White Sugar	Raw Sugar	Freight	Wheat	Corn
LCE \$/tonne	LCE Cent/kg	LCE \$/10tp	LCE \$/tonne	CBOT
				Cents/bushel

Source: Spot & Sun

May	325 80	May	10 62
Vol:	2,775	Vol:	0

Vol:	26,228	Index:	6136.36	Vol:	23,077	Vol:	17.35	Industry Price	86.98
Shows 5.00% price change Year ago price shown below for month					Source: ICIS, London Oil Reports				
COMMODITY INDICES									
% Chg	Index	Rate date	% chg	% chg	Dec 24	% chg	% chg	Year ago	% chg
Insp.	1970=100	193.53	-0.22	190.78	+1.53	190.50			+1.68
Aggr.	1970=100	274.12	+0.67	248.01		251.58			+1.83
Energy	1983=100	59.31	+0.10	59.95	+0.82	62.85			
Industrial Metals	1977=100	198.61	-0.11	217.53	-9.78	201.80			-2.50
1987=100									

LA BOUTIQUE 100 BROS

[illegible]

Cor With Profits	127.1
Eagle Star With Profits	136.2
Family Performance	142.8
Friends Prov Managed Mixed	325.8

Logan - Loan managed by	874.0	820.0	TSB Managed	304.1	220.2
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Racing
FREE WOOD

RESULTS

SECRET

NELINE
RESULTS SERVICE
1-168-168

SPORT

Smith's failure worries England

Cricket

JAMES ALEXANDER
reports from East London
England 218-4
v Border

The contrasting fortunes of three of England's batsmen were further emphasised here yesterday. Mark Ramprakash and John Crawley made runs and generally looked the part, while Robin Smith was out, third ball, for naught. He has scored just four runs in three first-class innings and Smith knows only too well it can be difficult for batsmen to emerge from troughs of poor form on tour. England want Smith in nick and in the side, but the dye is often cast in the opening month.

The liaison between Ramprakash and Crawley was seen by some as a head-to-head contest for the No 3 batting position.

In reality, though, Ramprakash is comfortably ahead in that particular duel and Crawley's most realistic target is Smith's place. Ramprakash's innings was the more pleasing of the two. His half-century occupied 63 balls, exactly half that of Crawley, and his driving was elegant and effective. Ramprakash entered this tour on the back of a mighty sequence of scoring and everything points to his being able to maintain that form. After registering a pair in the second Test at Lord's and being dropped, Ramprakash piled up nine centuries including three doubles in 15 first-class innings. His scores have been 48, 89 not out and now 70 before driving to cover.

After heavy overnight rain had wiped out the pre-lunch session and Alec Stewart clipped a catch to midwicket, Ramprakash and Crawley put on 120 in 33 overs for the second wicket. However well they played – and they experienced few alarms – this must be put in perspective. The attack was undemanding and the pitch slow and low, quite a contrast from the expected lively surface for the first Test at Centurion Park in a fortnight. Ray Illingworth is unhappy England have played all their games on pitches which provide no sort of preparation for

facing Allan Donald and his chums.

When Crawley was promoted to open the innings in Adelaide last winter, he made nought in each innings. His method now is to try to eliminate all errors, which does not make for exhilarating viewing. Crawley's 85 at Soweto occupied more than six hours, now he took 69 overs to make 87 not out. It would have been more if he was as adept at piercing the off-side field as he was the leg side.

Smith's runs, or lack of them, is now England's major concern. He shuffled half-forward and was lbw. Scores of 4, 0 and 0 – plus 12 and 33 in the one-day warm-ups – constitute a mini crisis for the highest-scoring international batsman in the party. Smith can consult television hypnotists and convince himself his mind is strong all he likes, but a pragmatist such as Illingworth is concerned only with runs in the book. If we can assume Ramprakash will bat at three, Crawley or Smith will perhaps be the most keenly debated batting choice.

Graeme Hick, after getting off the mark with a couple of resounding pulls, attempted a cut and was caught behind off the bottom edge. Meanwhile, Graham Thorpe, due to play in this match, has returned home to be with his wife, who has had to have an operation because of an ectopic pregnancy. Thorpe is expected to rejoin the squad next week.

(First day of four: England won toss)
J P Crawley not out – First innings
A J Stewart c Vernon b Nien 87
M R Ramprakash c Gubbins b Paine 70
R A Smith bowled 0
G A Hick c Posthumus b George 33
R G Russell not out 18
Extras (bats, w, no, run) 18
Total (for 4, 68 overs) 258
Fall: 1-23, 2-143, 3-145, 4-184.
To bat: D G Cook, D Gough, M C Bott, R K Illingworth, P J Morris.
Bowling: Paine 16-6-30-2, Nien 19-2-58-1, Botha 9-0-23-0, George 8-0-31-4, Gubbins 8-0-33-0, Paine 8-1-15-1, Post 3-0-15-0, Stuydens 3-1-0-0.
Extras: P J Morris, F J C O'Connell, P H Newman, D J Gubbins, P C Stuydens, S C Paine, R S J Posthumus, I L Howell, S C Paine, P A N Brink, M Nien.
Umpires: D Orchard and R Noble.

Curly Ambrose, the West Indies pace bowler, has agreed a one-year contract to become Northamptonshire's overseas player next summer. Ambrose returns for a sixth season after being replaced by Anil Kumble last summer while he toured England with the West Indies.

STEVE BALE: The dynamo England are missing

30

KEN JONES: The thinking man's heavyweight

30



In the groove: John Crawley hits out during his undefeated innings of 87 against Border in East London yesterday

Photograph: Clive Mason/Allsport

Juninho cleared for his debut

Football

RUPERT MERRILL

Juninho will, after all, make his debut for Middlesbrough against Leeds United at a sold-out Riverside stadium tomorrow. Yesterday the Football Association released international clearance from the Brazilian football confederation, clearing the way for the completion of the 22-year-old's £4.75m transfer from São Paulo. "It is great news," Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough player-manager, said. "It takes away all the publicity and the hype and leaves the lad free to get on with playing football." The international midfielder took part in a full-scale practice match yesterday. "He showed up well," Robson added. "I know it is some time since he played a match but he has a lot of natural fitness."

The former Chelsea striker, Robert Fleck, has been fined £1,000 and warned about his future conduct after being found guilty of misconduct by the Football Association.

Fleck, 30, was punished following an incident during Norwich's First Division game with Sheffield United at Bramall Lane on 9 September, when he abused an official after being substituted.

Portsmouth have failed in their attempt to have a two-match ban imposed on their defender, Guy Butters, overturned on appeal. The former Tottenham defender was sent off for two bookable offences at West Bromwich on 21 October. After studying a video of the incident which led to the second yellow card – a challenge on Albion's Bob Taylor – the FA has upheld the red card decision by the referee, Uriah Rennie.

Paul Sturrock, the St Johnstone manager, will watch his side in action at Dumbarton tomorrow – three weeks after collapsing at the ground of his former club, Dundee United. Sturrock, 39, has been given the all-clear by doctors after suffering severe chest pains during a Scottish League match at Annachie Park on 14 October. However, he will merely be in the stand at Boghead Park, with his assistant, John Blackley, still in temporary charge.

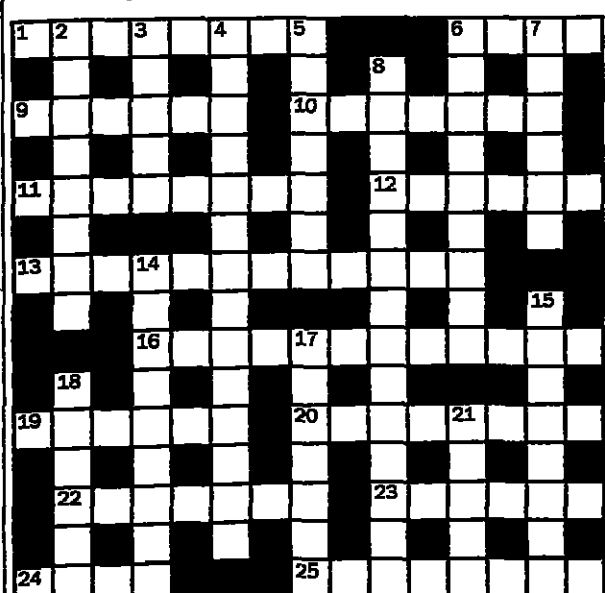
The Dutch Football Association has suspended a referee who allegedly bet on matches in the Netherlands at which he officiated. Dick Jol, who took charge of the abandoned friendly between the Republic of Ireland and England in February, allegedly placed bets at a grocery store in The Hague. Jol, 39, has described the allegations as "ridiculous."

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2822, Friday 3 November

By Phil

Thursday's Solution



ACROSS

- 1 Severe bottle's last to contain gold, sweet wine (8)
- 6 Agile one gets out of shower (4)
- 9 Holy man, individual that's died – being this? (6)
- 10 Unable to see English surely taking the French in (7)
- 11 Greek cash laid out to get chair? Mad! (8)
- 12 Move aimlessly round China, with no end in view (6)
- 13 Sweet-shop owner to discuss taking in inaccurate notice (12)
- 16 Give game away about clean ship storage – it's for keeping menials (5-7)
- 19 It's a strike on island, Pacific island (6)

- 20 Sort of leather – very expensive, we hear? Not quite unable to pay (8)
- 22 Greenery provides shelter – one with cigarette is in hiding! (7)
- 23 Present the standard church line (6)
- 24 Nearby residence – part of which is one for cows (4)
- 25 Allow embargo? (8)

DOWN

- 2 Foyer? There should be one, not more, after rebuilding (8)
- 3 Medicine that's initially in reserve, running short (5)
- 4 Character from Shakespeare, undeveloped, operating without intellect (4, 10)

- 5 Honoured retirees: see them get weary, rising before one (7)
- 6 Gnarled trees held to be secluded (9)
- 7 Nothing missing from chicken roll (6)
- 8 4 down wants to edge in, catallined by writer's joke (6,8)
- 14 Arouse great interest in caftans, i.e. in embroidery (8)
- 15 Soldier, say – he's in club, withholding name – no role model, he! (8)
- 17 What the school-bell may do, though not working on a long-term basis (7)
- 18 See narrow passage as ravine? (6)
- 21 Walk pompously in street (a well-trodden path) (5)

Chang manages to subdue Medvedev

Tennis

Michael Chang kept alive his hopes of becoming the first player to win both the French Open and the Paris Open with a hard-fought 2-6, 6-3, 7-5, win over Andrei Medvedev in the third round of the Paris Open yesterday.

The fourth-seeded Chang needed three sets and 142 minutes to reach the quarter-finals of the indoor tournament. The 23-year-old American, who has enjoyed a successful season with wins in Tokyo and Peking, had to draw on all his renowned fighting qualities to defeat the Ukrainian.

Medvedev took the first set, but Chang broke him in the second to open up a 4-2 lead and went on to take the set 6-3. The third set was a tense battle, with Medvedev leading 5-3 and serving for the match.

Medvedev threw his racket in anger when he was broken in that game, and was broken again as

Chang took a 6-5 lead. In the last game, Medvedev earned two break points, but wasted both chances before hitting a return into the net on match point.

Chang now meets Jim Courier, who cruised to a 6-3, 6-4, win over Magnus Larsson of Sweden. Larsson, who has just recovered from a fractured ankle,

Davies is thrown in as Cardiff try to cash in

Jonathan as Juninho is a pleasing image for Welsh rugby to conjure but whether Jonathan Davies can do for Cardiff what the Brazilian has done for Middlesbrough without even playing a match will presumably depend on an unlikely surge in sales of Blue-and-Black merchandise.

Or alternatively on ticket sales. Davies was formally reintroduced to the rugby union world at the Arms Park yesterday having been informed that he would have to turn out – probably at full-back – in Cardiff's Welsh League fixture against Aberavon which, to maximise the moment, has been put back to Sunday.

"I would have liked a bit more time to settle into the game," he said. "Too bad. It has cost something in excess of £50,000 to buy Davies out of the remainder of his rugby league contract with Warrington and Cardiff can already sense an instant return on that investment."

Not that they had to find all the ready themselves. Chris Evans, an academic and businessman who happens to hail from Aberavon, contributed substantially to the buy-out as did Jewson, the builders' merchant which will be using the returning

Steve Bale sees a curiously diffident genius return to the rugby union ranks

saviour as part of its marketing strategy.

Davies's playing contract, once it is thrashed out, will be no different from that awarded to any other Cardiff player under rugby union's new professional dispensation. But in order for a career with Cardiff to be attractive enough he had to be guaranteed an income more or less equivalent to that which he enjoyed in the north of England.

Cardiff have had their financial travails in recent times, so their own marketing of Davies has the wider function of ensuring the club's future solvency or even prosperity. They can reasonably hope for a 14,200 fall house, on Sunday, which would compare with a paltry attendance of 2,800 when Aberavon were last the Arms Park for the cup quarter-final last season.

An additional 11,400 people could amount to £70,000 or more in gate-takings – and that makes their investment in Davies, even at 33, look a

remarkably shrewd piece of business. Jonathan himself may have preferred to settle in quietly but, as he knows from his illustrious rugby league days, he is a commodity to be exploited no less now than then.

"It's another challenge I don't particularly need," was his curiously reluctant response. "The pressure is on, the expectation great, but you're going to have to be patient. It's not going to happen overnight. I won't be the same player as maybe I was when I left but I've learned a lot of things along the way."

Nearly seven years have passed since Davies exchanged Llanelli for Widnes and as it will be only five days since he exchanged Warrington for Cardiff when he resumes his rugby union career he does not yet wish to join the debate about his chance of winning a 20th Welsh rugby union cap. "My first ambition is to establish myself in the Cardiff team."

On the other hand, if anyone can do it Davies can. John Evans, the Cardiff chairman, greeted him thus: "I would say that, along with Gareth Edwards, he is the best player I've ever seen in my life." Clearly, a messiah in the making.

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